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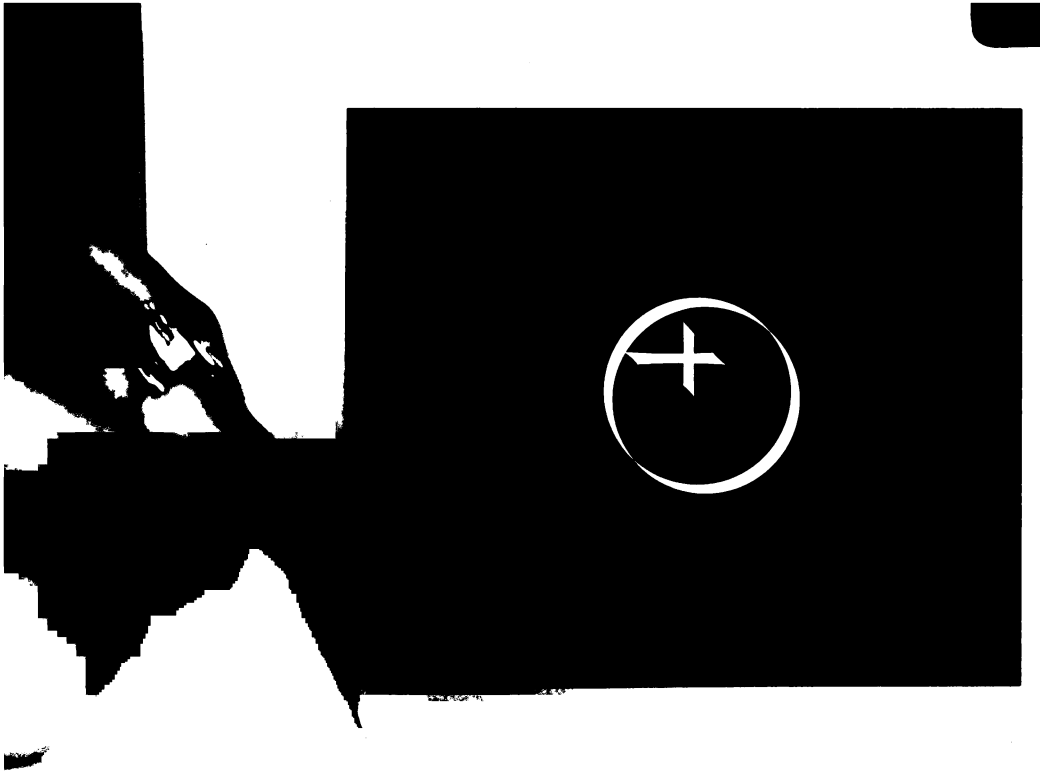

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Christianity the Perfection of True Manliness.

CHRISTIANITY

THE PERFECTION OF

TRUE MANLINESS.

REV. E. H. CHAPIN.

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HENRY LYON, 548 BROADWAY.
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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

The first four of the following lectures were especially addressed to young men; but it is believed that the important lessons inculcated, and the earnest and eloquent manner in which they are urged, will interest and profit all who peruse them.

The lecture on the "Moral significance of the Crystal Palace," was delivered from brief notes, and not written out by the author. It is here given as reported in the New York Daily Times.

Some readers will recognize the lecture on "The Philosophy of Reform," and the succeeding discourses, as old acquaintances. But the volume containing them has been for some time out of print, and it was judged best to

issue them in connection with the original lectures contained in this publication.

The present volume is sent out in confidence that it will be received with favor by those who desire the advancement of Christian principles, that it "will accomplish its share of good, and aid in the upbuilding of God's kingdom on earth and in the human soul."

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CHRISTIANITY

THE

PERFECTION OF TRUE MANLINESS.

I.

VICE.

Abusers of themselves, with mankind.

1 Cor. vi. 9.

I PROPOSE to address three or four discourses to young men. I do not intend to present a minute list of vices, virtues, and accomplishments. Nor even upon the range of topics which I have selected for discussion, shall I attempt a complete series. Nor will there be any special connection between these discourses. But I propose to speak upon a few general subjects, snatched miscellaneously from the suggestions of the times, and with which those whom I address have peculiar relations. Surely, there are none whose position is

more critical, or upon whose attention great truths should be more diligently urged. I speak to them, therefore, with the hope and the prayer that they may be aroused to consider the application, and to heed the claims of these truths.

Without further preface, then, I enter upon the subject of the present discourse. That subject is VICE. I employ the term not, perhaps, according to its strict, ethical definition, but in its popular sense of gross indulgence. And, in the first place, let me show the *propriety* of the topic—the fitness of the theme to the class which I am now addressing.

Although vice is but too common in almost every stage of human life, young men, especially, are apt to be its votaries. For to them all things are new, and their perception as yet is superficial. The oldest sins, sins of which men have sickened and died for six thousand years, wear all the charm and freshness of novelty. The intellect is active to the highest degree, but it is not yet meditative and discriminating. In the midst of solicitous appetites and rapid passions, conscience speaks indistinctly. They mistake hardihood for manliness, and license for liberty. Theirs is the confidence of untried strength, and the impatience of undisciplined will. Therefore, theirs are the time and the temperament for excess. Adventure,

excitement, indulgence without regard to its character jumps with their humor—it corresponds with the jubilant play of their senses, and of the world. Their animal spirits sparkle like the wine, and the rattling dice seems a part of the glorious hazard of life.

Not only, however, do the age and the dispositions of young men render a discourse on Vice peculiarly appropriate, but we should, also, consider that theirs is chiefly the season of *prevention.* If a career of guilty indulgence is to be averted at all, it must be averted now; for it is yet the seed-time of habit. If intemperance, licentiousness, or any kindred sin, takes possession of them, it will do so now; for men in their latter days, or even in middle-life, rarely *commence* a vicious course. It cannot be denied, too, that in some respects a vicious old age affords a more melancholy spectacle than youthful immorality. For those associations which usually render a man in his declining years an object of tender solicitude and of reverential love, in such a case make depravity more vividly hideous. Then the gray hairs which might be a crown of glory, become seals of shame, and that venerable composure and simplicity which seem such a fitting posture for the final sleep, is ruffled by impotent passions, and dishonored by self-inflicted wounds. We are as-

tonished at the sight of nerveless infamy and decrepit lust. It makes us sick at heart to see the limbs that stoop so near the earth shaking with the tremor of indulgence, and the eyes whose feeble vision should be lifted heavenward, blinded with the filthy rheum of debauch. It appals us that one who for threescore years and ten has experienced the goodness of his Maker, should use the accents of his faltering voice to defile that name with blasphemy; that he who knows how much purity there is, even yet, in life, should to the very last maintain such an example to infect its sanctities; and that, while it should seem most men would grow solemn at least, when those great shadows are thickening upon their heads, he should mock them with his toothless laughter, and, gathering curses about him like a garment, stagger headlong into the gates of death.

But such a spectacle only makes more painful the feelings with which we must regard a dissipated young man. For in connection with fine powers enslaved, generous impulses perverted, and rich opportunities frittered away—the very bloom of life tarnished, and cankering at the roots—that spectacle suggests the inevitable results of such a career. Moreover, as one of the saddest facts connected with the old man's depravity is its hopelessness—for though even in his case it is not too

late to repent, yet we can cherish but faint expectation of such a result—is it not with intense anxiety that we behold the young man drifting into that relentless current while yet there is hope, while yet there are so many channels for brave endeavor and for good achievement? Or if we feel that the one picture is no more mournful than the other, yet in the case of the young man is there not a subject of zeal and of earnest diligence, which is not proffered by the other instance? Of all spectacles, is not that one of alarm and sorrow when a young man is trampling the fairest hopes of life beneath his feet? Of all times, is not that a time to speak of vice when those hopes hang trembling in a balance?

But, again, I speak especially to that portion of young men who live in a *great city*. Undoubtedly, the secret springs of vice are to be found in our own moral nature, and it breaks out under all circumstances. But it needs no argument to show that its incentives and opportunities are peculiarly powerful in a metropolis like this. Indeed, this is so palpably true that it is a serious question whether large cities are not more injurious than beneficial. I cannot, without qualification, take the affirmative of this question. I cannot say, with some, that great cities are a necessary evil, and serve the body-politic as the cutaneous issues of

a disease that would otherwise inflame the whole fabric. But while here are assembled the best results of the time, and the ripest fruits of civilization; while here art, literature, and religion may find their most powerful allies and resources; while here is the inlet of a nation's wealth, and the depot of its skill, the main artery of commerce, and the magnetic chamber of communication with the world; here, also, is concentrated all that ministers to human passions. In the first place, here is all that makes the *senses* supreme, fanning the higher nature of man into an easy sleep. Here the four quarters of the globe pour their luxuries to solicit and pamper appetite. One may pass through these streets as through a living cosmorama—a reduced scale of the actual and many-zoned earth. Here are Canton and Cuba, Cashmere and Hudson's Bay; Golconda sparkles side by side with the fabrics of France and England, and the fruits of palm-shaded islands cluster about the vintage of the Rhine. In the country there are recesses for repose, there is a stillness which invites and almost forces meditation. But in town all meditation is far outrun by excited perception. There is a perpetual access of objects and of tidings. Everywhere there is the glitter of fascination, the spice and charm of novelty. Doubtless, those who will, can find hours for

retirement and places for serious thought, made all the more deep and secluded by the very contrast. But I speak of the young man thrown into this bustling hive when peculiarly impressible by outward things, and I say that for him the metropolis in its daily aspects and contacts ministers especially to the senses.

And, in the next place, this of course keenly touches the *passions*. The idea of sensual good becomes paramount, and is sought in sensual indulgence. And as for the pampering of the body so for the passions, the city affords the most varied field. Here, as into a huge reservoir, empty all the influences of temptation. Here troop the nimble agents of iniquity. Here immorality puts forth all its devices, and wears its most novel shapes. Here either downright depravity, or those necessities against which some will nobly strive, prompts many to guilty resources, and invention is continually at work to provoke the jaded appetite, and to ensnare the half-scrupulous will. Here voluptuousness, ever refining, ever acquires a more subtile and fatal sting. Here literature becomes the pimp of lust, and art debases itself that the infernal falsehood of sin may glow with pictured beauty. And here, then, flourishes vice in all its circles—from those splendid saloons and dainty shapes wher fashion presides, to those nether hells

where the depravities of the human heart assume their grossest embodiment, and where they simmer promiscuously together without concealment and without shame.

True, it might be argued that if here the solicitors of vice are so numerous and so successful, here too are accumulated the most striking illustrations of its *consequences*—here are "the wages of sin" in every degree. And, no doubt, if his mind and heart were rightly prepared, in no way could the young man be taught the horror of iniquity so impressively as by those living examples which abound in a large city. Here we might lead him through every ward of the moral lazar-house, and show him all the gradations of guilt and the inevitable series of retribution. Here we might exhibit the very counterpart of himself, fresh, vigorous, hopeful, just halting upon the threshold of sinful indulgence. We might show him the first blush of shame, the first smart of bodily remonstrance, the first drowsy recollection of guilt, and the quick rebuke of a yet unseared conscience; and then pass with him through all those galleries of woe, those chambers of indulgence, becoming more tarnished and desolate as we proceed, those ever-growing shapes of grossness—that thickening atmosphere of poison, those wasted forms of disease, those unappeasable appe-

tites, those wrecks of everything human, down to the moral leper with hope long vanished and respectabilities scattered far behind, despised, loathed, forgotten,—a carrion-lump, gasping for vital air, and rotting to death. No argument can be so convincing, no description so effective, as this living history unfolded in the great city every day, would the young man only heed it.

But now, when we see so many of this class turning from the freshness of boyhood, from the guidance and prayers of parents and all the sanctities of their village-home, with hearty resolve and hopeful look, toward the city, the centre of their dreams, the magic world of their destiny, and plunging into its mighty vortex; when we think of them, not merely as the seekers of an honorable fortune, but as the necessary agents of commercial enterprise, the builders of national greatness, the channels of the future; and yet, while maintaining those relations, so urgently beset by the temptations to which I have alluded, and so often falling under them, must we not regard them with all that painful interest which attaches to martyrs? Nay, often they *are* martyrs —the martyrs of enterprise, foiled in reaching their El-Dorado by no polar seas or mountain-storms, perishing in no cause of duty or sacred resolve, but dying of their own folly, and of the

vices that solicit them in the life of the great city.

But permit me to mention one other element which adds to the peculiar power of vice in large cities. I would say, then, there is such a facility here, not merely because the *senses* are so forcibly appealed to, and the *passions* so skilfully touched, but because the *idolatry of business* is so intense. No doubt work is one of the noblest duties; but it is not the sole duty. It is well enough, perhaps, to glorify it, but in our times we absolutely deify it. Everything must yield to its iron pressure, no matter what claim it oversweeps, what good it crushes or hinders. Is there a ministry of art, an appeal of humanity, a call of religion? It is well enough, perhaps, in its *secondary* place, but it must stand aside for this prime interest. Is there a mansion venerable with associations of antiquity? Tear it down, and build up stores. Is there an old oak, dripping with the dew of ages? Cut it in pieces for steamboat fuel. Is there a cataract that God has poured from the hollow of His hand to waken the pulses of sublimity within us? Convert it into a factory-privilege. In short, we act as though earth were only a field for corn and oil, as though we were chained exclusively to material necessities, as though we had within us no higher faculties than those for

secular labor, as though business were an end and not a means. We work without respite, as though each one inherited the doom of Sysiphus. Heaven's air is smothered with this cotton atmosphere. The music of higher truths, appealing to our souls, is deadened by this utilitarian jar and bustle. And in a great city this extravagant idea of business finds its most intense expression.

Now, of course, I do not deny the importance and the benefits of business. But it holds too exclusive a place in city life and in our American ideal. We not only say "Business first, and pleasure afterwards," but, virtually, we too often say, "Business first, and religion afterwards, culture afterwards, brotherly-love afterwards." But even in respect to the first axiom—"Business first, and pleasure afterwards,"—should *that* always be maintained? Suppose we define pleasure in its largest and best sense; then surely that axiom is not always correct, and, what is more directly to the present purpose, I believe that an undue regard to it is one great cause of the prevalence of vice. If men should withdraw a portion of their time from business, and devote it to intellectual culture, to fresh communion with nature, to social amenities, as well as innocent recreations, they would be far less given to gross indulgences. As it is, so little room is left for recreation of any kind, that the

overtasked mind and body seek some frivolous amusement, some sensual opiate or excitement, as the only thing suited to their mood. And this false notion of enjoyment, springing up in the neglect of higher sources of pleasure, may be set down as another cause of vice in large cities. In saying—"Business first, and pleasure afterwards," —we betray a superficial conception of pleasure, and, therefore, when the young man stops his busy hands, *that* is the kind of pleasure which he is apt to seek. It is hardly necessary to add, by the way, that the notion that *all* recreation is wrong has itself a vicious influence. For the young man must have recreation of some kind, and if no distinction is drawn between the kinds of recreation, but all are condemned as wrong, he will be likely to adopt the most sensual, considering the one no worse than the other. A clear recognition of the character and claims of the recreation, we may believe would be a strong barrier against vicious indulgence.

In thus indicating the sources of vice, I have endeavored to suggest arguments against it. I will now, however, pass to the second division of my remarks, that I may urge these arguments more directly. Among the multitude of these, however, I must make a selection; and, therefore, at present, I shall confine myself to a discussion of

the intrinsic nature and tendencies of vice. There is a passage in the Book of Proverbs which illustrates the character and effects of vice in a striking manner. It concludes the wise man's account of the drunkard. After describing him as one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast, he adds—"They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." This description applies to vice in all its forms. First, it exhibits the *debasing* nature of vice. Under its debasing influences one becomes as lost to feeling, interest, and self-respect, as the inebriate who, though stricken, is not sick; who though beaten, feels it not. And yet, with all this, there is a vague sense of degradation, of alienation from the right course, which haunts him like thoughts in a dream, and which at times breaks into a more vivid consciousness, and the jaded spirit cries out, "When shall I awake?" But the spell of appetite once coiled about the soul, this momentary consciousness grows faint, the weak resolution gives way, the spirit of indulgence assumes its dominion, and the slave of vice exclaims—"I will seek it yet again." These three points I now propose to illustrate.

I. Consider the *debasing* nature of vice. I have not time to present all the expressions of this fact,

and, indeed, can suggest but a few of them. But, speaking in general terms, I observe that this is the essential evil of vice—it *debases* a man. It is a self-inflicted injury. Of course it quenches the highest spiritual sanctities, that purity of moral principle, that vivid sense of duty and of God, which is inseparable from all true virtue. But besides these, it destroys, so to speak, the *manhood* of a man. It steals from him the glorious prerogative of self-dominion. Nothing, perhaps, is more common than for a man who is abandoned to self-indulgence to boast of his *liberty;* to exult in the riot of license. But at the same time nothing is more sure than that he is the most pitiable of slaves. The drunkard brags of his freedom with a tongue that he cannot control and with a thirst that drives him to his cups. The gamester throws off the restraints of reason and of affection, but only because the fascination of the hazard is too potent for his better convictions. The libertine spurns the code of virtue, but he cannot escape the meshes of pollution. Now, true freedom consists not merely in the ability to do but in the power to refrain from doing, and the latter power the votary of vice does not possess. He may attempt to cover his moral impotence with hardihood or with sophistry, but this shows either that the love of vicious habits is strong enough to super-

sede all considerations of public opinion and self-interest, or else to blunt his spiritual perceptions so that he cannot distinguish good from evil. In either case, the essential fact remains—that his true manhood is gone, his higher nature is discrowned, he is in thraldom to an absorbing passion; and such a man, I repeat, is the most abject of slaves. For, what is freedom of will, if a man is drawn as by magnetic fascination in one onward path of ruin over the dearest good of others and of his own soul? What is bare liberty of movement, if a man is charmed into the delusion of denying all that is best in his nature, sacrificing bodily health, mental vigor, moral integrity, and clothing himself with rags? Who does not wonder at the infatuation with which a man will cast himself over the precipice of destruction, will do mean acts and criminal deeds; from which a mind in the most ordinary moral health would shrink with terror and disgust? Who does not wonder at the facility with which many a man will do all this, whose disposition was originally noble and generous, when once the master-influence sways him? Who does not recognize in all the Proteus forms of this infatuation the one essential evil of vice—its *inward* insult and injury? Who does not feel that the slave, chained, and driven to his task, is more free, because his is still the liberty of

moral effort and the glory of spiritual rectitude. But with awful suggestion the Savior says—"If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

But, again, let me suggest the injury which vice does to the best feelings of our nature. We may say—"It is true this man has not much self-control; but then, he is a man of quick sympathies—he has a good heart." But, after all, it may be doubted whether this qualification is really deserved. If that man is given over to vicious indulgence, it is more than doubtful whether he retains, if he ever possessed, the finest sensibilities. It is difficult to believe that a true *gentleman* will ever become a gamester, a libertine, or a sot. The amenity and self-respect which characterize him when he is himself, will, it is likely, prevent him from becoming anything else than himself. But if he should lapse into a bad habit, however rare his accomplishments or polite his usual bearing, changed as he is to the jovial rowdy who goes whooping through the streets at midnight, or to the pugnacious blackguard, we shall find that his gentility is fast dying out. Indeed, vice is essentially vulgar. It contaminates all that it captivates. Take either of the leading vices, and consider, for a moment, how impossible it is for a man to indulge it without deadening his sensibili

ties; for at the centre of all vice there exists a hard selfishness that will absorb all things in its own gratification. The libertine in his schemes sacrifices all gentleness and sanctity, insults his mother's honor and his sister's purity, and treats virtue as a mock-ideal. The drunkard in his infatuation brutalizes home, violates every affection, and reddens the hearthstone with his children's blood. But especially is the hardening influence of vice demonstrated in the career of the gamester. Enter, to-night, any of his haunts, and see in every lineament and motion the expression of a flinty selfishness. See the vulture eye, watching the chances of the game, and the cold exultation with which he clutches his luck. What cares he that the stake which now lies against his upon the table is the last his adversary can throw down—that it was raised, perhaps, upon a locket of a dead child's hair, a miniature of his father, his mother's Bible—that it was wrenched from the grasp of starving children—that it is the wages of a weary, heart-broken wife? What cares he that, even now, those pale faces are brooding in despair over the cheerless hearth, and that upon their heads will be emptied the pent-up wrath which his success has now kindled? Nay, what cares he that his own home is desolate, that he is a truant from all the duties of life, that the lamp-light

glimmers late and low on the brows of those nearest to him, weeping, and it may be, dying? No doubt realities like these might meet us in the haunts to which I now allude; at least, realities showing full as much deadness of sensibility; and yet we should find that these same heart-steeled men entered upon this career with feelings as tender and affections as genial as the young now before us, some of whom may be standing upon the threshold of the same destiny.

Whatever may be felt, then, in the flow of bacchanalian conviviality, or the heated impulses of boon-companionship, vice is essentially injurious to the finer feelings of our nature. Its dropping influences petrify the hardest heart. It is really dissocial, for, rotting all other ties, it retains nothing but self—it is, in fact, the sin of self. He who has looked at Hogarth's picture of "The Harlot's Funeral," has seen a vivid illustration of these tendencies. The careless group, the maudlin laughter, the insensate debauchery, in the very chamber of death, and around the coffin of departed shame!

But I will present one more illustration of the debasing influence of vice, which shows that "in lowest deeps there is a lower still." I mean that depth in which a man loses all feeling for *himself;* in which he cares not what degradation

clings to him, or what insult is piled upon him. Indeed, in the very outset of a vicious career, a man must have acquired, to a certain extent, this carelessness of self. He does not heed inevitable bodily or moral consequences. But I refer now, especially, to that stage of stupor and bluntness, when all the edge of sensibility is worn off, when a man scarcely knows what he does, and cares not what others do to him; when that last prop of virtue is broken down, that last glimmer of hope quenched—*self-respect.* When he is a football for his fellow-men, and a jest to himself. When he chuckles at his own infamy. And it seems to me if no other consideration will check the young man entering upon the career of vice—if moral convictions, if the dictates of reason and affection, if the thought of reputation and of health, will not do so—this spectacle to be witnessed in so many instances; the spectacle of a man unconscious of his own shame, and sucking delight from his own degradation; this mean, idiotic, drivelling end to which vice inevitably tends, must arrest his steps, and turn him back. Ah! how great the folly, as well as the sin, of that man who is an abuser of himself.

II. The second consideration which I would offer in regard to vice, is, that *moral consciousness* which generally accompanies it. Sometimes this

breaks out even among those brutalized conceptions to which I have just alluded. In such moments he rouses up with a sense of strangeness, of having drifted away from all right latitudes; of being enslaved and soul-sick. And I observe that while in this arousing consciousness there may be an element of hope, there must be an abiding agent of misery. No doubt a worse condition absolutely than this is ignorance of our moral state; a condition in which sin has become our vital atmosphere, and evil our only good. But so far as mere feeling is concerned, to the slave of vice himself such a state would be comparative bliss, or at least a paralytic repose, compared with that terrible sense of degradation which will at times force itself upon him. Yet it is a beneficent though awful law, that with guilt shall co-exist the consciousness of guilt; now smothered and forgotten, but now flashing out and shooting through the soul with spires of torment. It is like the return of sensation to one limb of a frozen man. There is not only a sharp agony, but the perception of a yet torpid body, the numb consciousness of injury and danger. The lack of such a consciousness would perhaps be more deadly, but this awakened sense is more painful. Nay, what is bodily pain, or any ordinary grief, compared with this woe? In the com-

mon afflictions of life, which descend alike upon the evil and the good, there are considerations which are well calculated to abate their sting and soothe our sorrow. There is the sympathy of others sweetly mingling with our bitter draught. There is the great idea of Providence begetting resignation and a lofty patience. But the vicious man is pierced with the dreadful thought of self-injury. He perceives that his loss and anguish are his own work. As he moves along in the crowd, despised and neglected; as he lies broken down by the way-side, and lower in estate than the brute, he realizes that his own perversity has cut him off from the sympathies of his fellows, and thrown him upon their charity. And, as he considers the powers which God gave him, and the privileges which he has abused, he cannot cast his burden upon Providence. If through the melancholy sunshine of idiocy there should break a gleam of true intelligence, the idiot would at least feel no self-rebuke, for that simmering brain, that sad, pleased, worthless life. But what shall he say who has dissolved the priceless pearl of intellect in the wine-cup of debauch; who has sacrificed, yes, deliberately murdered every mental gift, and *made himself* an idiot? The blind man may feel at times that his privation is insupportable, and mourn the blank that has come

between him and the beautiful earth and sky; yet, within, there may be "a light which no calamity can darken," the scenery of a happy memory, and the vernal freshness of an unviolated conscience. But what shall he say who has killed the optic nerve of his own soul, and quenched his moral eye-sight? We lament the dear friend snatched from us by death, yet as we scatter blossoms above his grave, our thoughts grow fragrant with the recollection of his virtues, and, amidst the mystery of the dispensation, religion springs up to strengthen and awe us. But what of him, the worn-out libertine, the soul-sick epicure; the drunkard, who, while he might have acted nobly with the living, folds himself in the cerements of the grave, and walks by choice among the charnels of the dead? This, then, is the inseparable curse of vice, that, sometimes, in the midst of its protracted dream, the victim becomes conscious of himself, wakes to a night-mare perception, sees enough to know that he is in a delusion, into which he has drugged himself —and that thought is the bitterest of all. There, too, is the revival of memory, instantly throwing open the doors of the past, letting him see for the moment what he was, and what he might have been. There is the sense of hopelessness, the sense of drifting into a swift current, with the

wish to escape destruction, and yet with the fear to try. These, and perhaps profounder revelations of the hour, the thought of God, and the reproach of neglected obligations—help wake up the vivid consciousness of him who starts at times from the insensibility of his career.

Vice, then, is not only debasing in its character, but it does not permit the peace even of moral torpor. It is not an unbroken stupefaction. It is not the persistent, soggy, rotting away of a man. These higher faculties of ours will not die without a struggle and an upheaval—they cannot die at all. Therefore, vice is convulsive. Ever and anon, a man is shaken out of his sleep, and the drowsy envelopments of his soul are rent as by a flash of lightning. And this is retribution. At least it is the pungent and living element of retribution. For although, as I have said, the worse consequence of evil may really be the absolute ignorance of evil, still the most painful is this intermittent consciousness of good neglected and of evil preferred; of good in its excellence and evil in its vileness, and yet the one receding from us and the other coiled about us.

Can I, then, present a stronger argument against vice, than to urge this consciousness, that mournful, solemn feeling, which steals in, in

times of temporary self-recovery, of loneliness and of desolation?

III. Finally, let me urge the fact, that *vice exerts an almost irresistible and ever-increasing fascination* over its victims. I have already said, that although the consciousness of evil, just alluded to, is pregnant with misery, it also contains an element of hope. A sense of evil is pre-requisite to any struggle against it. Its bitterness is medicinal. But too often, this awakening consciousness, instead of inducing reformation, subsides into a still lower moral state. The demon-passion, exorcised in a moment of reflection and of terror, returns stronger and more malignant than ever. The halting resolution sallies back upon the old habit. There has been a period when, perhaps, the aroused debauchee, stung into a sense of manliness, has said—"I will be a slave no more. I will break from this thraldom. Long and terrible though the struggle may be, I will reform; I will once more be myself." But alas! how soon does appetite revive, quenching all the glow of this resolution! How does the strained purpose relax? How does the sluggish will plead to be undisturbed; and still intending to wake, but postponing the good hour, the old vice assumes all its charm, and the nerveless votary exclaims—"I will seek it yet again!" Yes,

"once more;" there is the old plea of temptation. Once more, just to whet the flagging resolution, or to prepare the reluctant will. I cannot recount all the forms in which this plea presents itself. But that this is the general result with those who become confirmed in vicious habits, is too well known. Time after time has been witnessed the spectacle of a man alarmed or encouraged into a resolution of repentance. He shakes himself from his moral lethargy. A glow of honest endeavor kindles in his demeanor. He feels the evil in which he has so long indulged. He declares bravely against it. He publishes his purpose. His friends take courage. Hope returns to hearts that have long ceased to hope for him. The affection that has clung to him in all his alienation, is surprised with a new joy. And for a while his reformation seems sure. The will begins to steady itself. Appetite is firmly controlled; and signs of spiritual health gradually appear. But lo! we look again, and all the fair promise is overwhelmed. The victim has relapsed into his bondage. The sensual nature has returned to its wallowing in the mire. The old custom was too strong for the new endeavor, and the man has fallen.

Now, I do not wish to discourage the hope of reformation even in the lowest of mankind. But

let us not think it to be an easy and certain undertaking. Let us consider vice as it is, a fearful and despotic mastery. And while to those who are struggling in its chains, we hold out the signals of hope and the right arm of help, let us beware ourselves of entering even the outer circle of the mighty vortex. Let us realize its potency and its danger. Let the wrecks of victims thrown up from its depths appal us and drive us back. Let us consider how many who have nearly escaped its toils, have been drawn back again by its almost irresistible fascination; and with this fatal surrender how many thousands have disappeared in its dark gulf forever!

These, then, are some of the suggestions which may be urged concerning the intrinsic character and the tendencies of vice; namely, its debasing influence, its moral retributions, and its despotic power. I might have dwelt more upon its outward results, its rags, disease, and suffering. But I have mentioned the inward and the essential evils, of which these manifestations are but the feeble signs. It may be said, too, that I have exposed the extreme results of vice; whereas the young man, as a general thing, is more immediately exposed to its preliminary seductions. But this is the very way in which I would show the danger of these seductions. I would expose the

end to which they lead. If they do not inevitably conduct to these results, these are the *hazards* of the least tampering with vice. There is no security except in total abstinence and uncompromising resistance. There is no such thing as a moderate indulgence in evil. The danger of yielding in the least cannot be exaggerated. I have used no overstrained illustrations. On the contrary, I feel that I have failed to express, and that I am not able to express, the fearful reality. Here the sad, living example is more forcible than any argument. Far more sickening and appalling than any elaborate description, are those three words of the text—indicating a suicide so common, and suggesting a train of moral results so fearful and inexpressible. It is enough to say of the victims of vice, that with all their physical powers, with all their intellectual and moral faculties, with all their privileges and promises—they are "abusers of themselves."

II.

THE ADVANTAGES OF CITY LIFE.

Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

Proverbs viii: 1—3.

Whatever may be our condition in life, it is better to lay hold of its advantages than to count its evils. We ought not to shut our eyes to the exposures of our lot. We should heed its warnings, and guard against its dangers. But in that situation, as in every other, there are peculiar opportunities for good, and to improve them is the richest of our privileges. Indeed, every post of action has its two sides. If a man is so disposed, his place of all others will appear to him the most fraught with gloom and peril. But if he regards his circumstances with a virtuous will, he will be sure to discover some salient point that he could not find anywhere else, upon which to build a noble achievement. I say, then, it is better for us to

make the good of our condition available, than to hesitate over its evil. Moreover, if we would induce others to act virtuously, it will prove more effectual to show them their capacities than to expose their weakness; to attract them by a fairer ideal than to terrify them by pictures of misery and shame.

With these thoughts I have selected the subject of the present discourse. In my last I dwelt upon the peculiar facilities for vice which are concentrated in a metropolis—upon its moral dangers. But now I would advance beyond this point, and suggest the good as well as the evil of the young man's position here. I propose, therefore, to speak of the *advantages* of city life, and to urge the improvement of these advantages.

It is hardly necessary to say that I refer to the *higher* advantages of city life—to its moral facilities; not its advantages for the mere enjoyment of existence, or for gratifying ambition, or for making money. In all the bustle and selfishness of the metropolis, there are rich suggestions and great opportunities. In the midst of its sounding toil, its gaudy and vicious pleasures, its controlling interests, "wisdom," though unheard it may be by the many, "crieth; she standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates at the entry of the city, at

the coming in at the doors." I can only illustrate these advantages in two or three particulars.

I. I would suggest the advantage which comes from the *excitement* and the *activity* of a city life. It will be found, I think, that the incessant movement of such a life, its novelties and contacts, are peculiarly calculated to wake up all the faculties of a man, to render him vigilant, to give him adaptedness, and to endow him with executive ability. I do not intend to draw any sharp comparison in this respect between the opportunities of the town and the country. It may be properly said that the citizen is as ignorant of the farm and the forest as the countryman is of the mighty world of traffic. It may be said, moreover, that one who stands aloof from the feverish bustle of life can but detect its lessons and solve its problems; that through "the loop-holes of retreat" the sounds of "the great Babel" melt into a more articulate wisdom than to those who are near at hand; and that in the pauses of rural leisure we can extract the very essence of affairs, and gather the ripest conclusions. No doubt some of the shrewdest and most comprehensive minds, who at a distance have studied the world with keen observation, and who judge of it with singular accuracy, have been formed in this way. No doubt some of the most capable men who appear in any season of emer-

gency, step out from the seclusion and meditation of the country.

Nor do I overlook the narrowness of soul so often exhibited on the other hand. Perhaps there is no ignorance so marvellous as that which is sometimes generated in a great city. I do not refer now to the mental condition of thousands who fester in its lanes and cellars; but of some who are active in its interests and numbered among its respectable names. The exclusive pursuit of one occupation, year after year, cramps and attenuates the mind. The crowd and bustle, the wide variety and ceaseless glitter of a city, are calculated to induce superficiality. And, sometimes, the citizen is one whose thoughts never go much beyond the bricks of the metropolis and the topics of the exchange. His ideas of majesty and beauty are derived from painting and wax-work, from the street pageant, and theatrical show. His inspiration is caught from the ledger and the newspaper, his reasoning is municipal, his fancy is as celestial as the gas-lamps, his geography is no broader than the wake of the packet-ship or the track of the rail-car, his astronomy is a vague reminiscence, or a glance over the chimney-tops. In short, he is a parcel of local prejudices and cockney conceits; an artificial man—ignorant of the world, of nature, and of life.

But in the proposition which I am now discussing, I did not intend to include either of these extremes. If there are men of profound and practical wisdom in the retreats of rural life, so are there men who have their nooks of retirement and watch-towers of meditation in the midst of the city's uproar, and their reflections are enriched rather than hindered by the varied experiences about them. And if in the city we may find those who are little more than machines and bubbles, so in the country we may find those who are little more than clods. But when I say that the activity and excitement of a city life are calculated to wake up the faculties of a man, without referring to any profound knowledge which he may obtain, I mean that if he has the usual sprightliness of youth, in these busy events and ever-changing scenes, he may acquire a keen, practical wisdom, and an easy adaptedness, which will fit him for the varied turns of life, better than in the country. For it will be admitted that the more a man mingles with affairs, the more he sees and experiences, other things being equal, the better he is prepared for the practical occasions of the world. Thus the education of a city-life is in some respects like the education of travel—it imparts readiness of action and comprehensiveness of view. It removes rawness and awkwardness. All

the powers of a man are aroused by these movements and kept awake by these incessant activities. He is polished by manifold contacts.

But, after all, the young man may apply the advantages of a city life in two ways. I would illustrate this by observing, that in a city he has special opportunities for becoming, in a good or in a bad sense, a *Man of the World.* For this term may imply a man of ripe experience, of good-breeding, and of practical skill, or it may imply the heartless sensuality of the epicure or the offensiveness of the fop. He may be a man of the world as an accomplished gentleman, or as an accomplished villain. He may be a man of the world as one of mean views and sordid pursuits, or as one of high aims and generous soul. He may be such as one possessing a brazen impudence or a wise humility; as a charlatan or a man of sterling worth. He may be a man of the world as one who is enslaved by it, or as one who is disciplined by it. In fine, a man of the world, on one hand, is a man whose standard is in the world; who always sails in the current of the world, who goes by its weights and measures, and has no higher interest or hope; who carries it clattering about him in his most secret hours, in his dreams, in the sanctuary, and at the death-bed; a man *of* the world as living and dying *in* it. On

the other hand, a Man of the World is one who has mastered the world, who sees both its merits and its worthlessness, who employs it as a means, but does not embrace it as an end; who occupies it as an amphitheatre for noble discipline, but not as a perpetual abiding-place; who recognizes an ideal above it; who does not love it to excess, and is not afraid of it; who dares to act athwart its opinions and customs, when he hears a voice more authoritative than its clay-built oracles; who can walk through it unharmed by it; who, for the sake of better companionship, can detach himself from it; who can carry into retirement all the wealth of its experience, free from the despotism of its lusts; who, in the calm silence of old age, can hear its sounds afar off like one to whom the murmurs of a distant city flow unruffled and pleasant through the evening shadow; and who can bid it farewell like one who is about to start for a fairer land. He is a Man of the World as one who has passed *through* it and triumphed *over* it.

Now a city life affords facilities for this latter attainment as well as for the former, and one or the other the young man will be likely to derive from his residence here. Surely he will not fail to strive for that which Wisdom, crying at the very gates and entry of the city, so earnestly recommends.

II. I would suggest an advantage afforded by city life in *the contact of man with man.* This topic is really involved in the general subject under the last head, but its importance justifies a special notice. Nor will it be necessary to qualify any of my illustrations by opposing facts. They are admitted in the outset. I know that the very truth which I now present begets the most enormous *dis*-advantages. I know that the mingling of large multitudes may excite, and does excite, the worst passions. I know that it makes selfishness more intense, that it induces comparative carelessness of human life, and that nowhere does humanity present such sad and horrid aspects as in great cities. Nowhere do the sympathies seem so limited as here, shut up and intersected by brick walls. On the one side, perhaps, there is a funeral, and on the other a feast, and he who lives between these extremes of life's history, may know nothing of either. Nowhere is man so truly alone. Here are crowds of isolations. Individuals jostle one another, and yet each is more solitary than he would be in the forest or the desert. They pass, at morning, each intent upon his own selfish end,—the groups separate at night and vanish into the dusky avenues, without one throb of recognition or word of cheer. Moreover, nowhere are there such abrupt contrasts—such

problems for the philosopher and the philanthropist. Plenty and starvation, bloated indolence and unfed labor, the hovel of the beggar propped against the palace of the rich man, silks alternating with rags, beauty side by side with living bodies of corruption, shouts of revelry wafted into the chamber of mourning, the rattling chariot of joy jarring the uplifted hand of suicide, the blaze of aristocratic pomp close by the spot where unknown masses of suffering and grief stir heavily, like the heavings of a stagnating sea.

And yet, for all this, I maintain that the contact of man with man, if we will heed the opportunities it affords, is a great and peculiar advantage in city life. In the first place, this incessant intercourse is calculated to beget *tolerant and liberal views*. Let a man live as a recluse, or as the lord of some petty domain, and he will be apt to become a bigot or a dogmatist. He is not used to contradictions in his tastes or his opinions. His mind rusts in the socket of its own self-propelled action, for there has been no opposing mind to disturb it. He will be likely to settle into the conviction that *his* views are the standard, and if he goes abroad will expect to test other notions by his own.

But it is the tendency of social contact to shake this self-conceit. Intellects and opinions clash to-

gether. Men cannot always live in a dispute, and yet in the very first encounter we may find some one whose ideas differ radically from our own. Moreover, although the notions of many are so contrary to ours, we discover that in common life they are worthy people, and that their theories do not make such shocking havoc as we had inferred. Al. this begets a tolerant spirit. We are forced to cherish it if we would have any pleasant intercourse—we are forced to cherish it by the general excellence of those with whom we differ. Nor is this the result of a weak indifferentism. In society there is not merely a mutual toleration, but a mutual interchange of opinions. Mental activity is excited, and the views of each are honestly defended. Yet, by comparing views, we learn that we have not all truth, and that even the most despised may have some truth that we have not yet detected. It has been well said by a thoughtful writer, that "a thorough conviction of the differences of men is the great thing to be assured of in social knowledge: it is to life what Newton's law is to astronomy;" and nowhere can we learn this great law so well as amid the diverse tastes and opinions of a great city. And, while the young man should see to it that he is shaken out of no good habit, no honest conviction, he may here find many little conceits giving way before

the pressure of other minds, and better views of truth and nobler forms of virtue breaking in upon him.

But, again, the intercourse of man with man in large cities, is favorable to the cultivation and the practice of *Philanthropy*. This proposition may seem strange at first sight, and yet I think we shall find it to be true. There may be circumstances in which the heart, becoming accustomed to misery, grows callous to it; but I cannot believe that this is commonly the case with mankind, nor, therefore, that the spectacles of suffering which perpetually meet us in great cities, have a hardening effect. The large demand upon a man's sympathies may limit the exercise of his generosity. Frequent imposition may make him circumspect. He may be compelled to systematize his charities. But he does not deny the better feelings of his nature. On the contrary, here is the broadest opportunity for philanthropic action; and it is of the opportunity I speak, rather than of the manner in which men may treat it. Surely, therefore, any hindrance to the doing of good, which may come from ignorance of occasions, does not exist here. He who will emulate the spirit of the good Samaritan, may find a varied field for his efforts. Nay, if he would imitate the great Benefactor and Saviour, nowhere can he do it so well as in the

streets and dwellings of a city. Here, all about us, lie the blind, the poor, the leper-smitten, the impotent child of disease, with no one to help him to the healing pool, the crippled son of misfortune crouching at the beautiful gate of the temple, and desiring, if we have neither silver nor gold, a word of christian sympathy and benediction. Here, if we cherish good-will towards our fellow-men, and would not sheath our hearts in selfishness, but make the world better for our living in it, we may experience the bliss that rewards the giving of even a cup of cold water to the thirsty lip. If the young man would have the springs of benevolent sentiment awakened within him, and learn to look beyond the sphere of self, here, of all places, is the school for such a culture.

Moreover, if benevolence is like love, "it grows by what it feeds on." Its spirit once actively engaged, increases in depth and richness as it goes on. Here, too, then, is an advantage of city life; for not only is the sentiment intensely excited, but it may be always employed. And I am not speaking of a mere theoretical philanthropy—of a dead sentiment. It is no more than just to say, that in the bosom of large cities we discover some of the noblest efforts of benevolence; hearts whose charities are as ample as their wealth; humble souls that delight to refresh the waste places around

them; ministrations to the sick and the poor, that God beholds approvingly beneath all this atmosphere of selfishness and sin. And here, too, rise noble monuments of public munificence. It is wrong to describe our cities as merely hives of sordid toil and sensual enjoyment. Their wealth and enterprise are not all devoted to such uses. I do not say that enough is done, but something, yea, much, is done for humanity. The spires of our churches are not the only tokens of a higher sentiment that breathes among our marts and warehouses. Side by side with these rise institutions for the blind, the dumb, the insane, and among our fierce passions, and our busy cares, are sheltered the angels of consolation and of gratitude. And here, then, there is a spirit awakened, a power concentrated, a great work done, which we may believe could not exist except in the peculiar circumstances of city life. And if we say that the city engenders the very misery that it alleviates, let us remember that the sentiment of benevolence is richer than the gift it bestows—is an intrinsic good, in the possession of which a man may most imitate his Maker. Any circumstances, therefore, that awaken this sentiment, are advantageous.

But let me say still further, that if here human misery is at its highest pitch, here too we may ex-

pect to discover the profoundest remedies for it. In the history of man it has been very generally the case, that when evils have grown insufferable, they have touched the point of cure. Dr. Hooke has remarked, in reference to scientific questions, "that whenever in his researches he found himself stopped by an apparently insurmountable difficulty, he was sure to be on the brink of a valuable discovery." Who shall say that this will not be the result in regard to those great social questions which are, apparently, every day nearing a crisis, especially in the midst of large cities? We know that in some respects, particularly in regard to light, and water, and fuel, almost insupportable evils have led to a high degree of improvement. It may be, then, that large cities, while aggravating the sufferings of great masses, are at the same time developing the method of melioration, if not of cure. At least, here are suggested the questions, and here room is afforded for the experiments which will lead to such a desirable consummation.

But, again, a peculiar advantage afforded by the contact of man with man, in a metropolis like this, appears in the fact that here we behold humanity not only in its phases of suffering and shame, but of capacity and attainment. Here we have truly the spectacle of a *public*, and here we may culti-

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vate a public spirit, and realize the worth of human interests, and the brotherhood of the race.

In the town we see God's noblest work; and the consideration of that *capacity* which reared these buildings, and laid out these streets, and which fills them with the tide of enterprise and industry, is no mean study. The great volume of *humanity* is open here with all its varied lessons, than which there is none of deeper interest or instruction. Yet here, again, the young man may make a good or bad application of this knowledge. He may use it for selfish or licentious ends, or for the noblest purposes of virtue and charity. If he will but hear that uplifted voice of wisdom, which is uttered through all these experiences, he will gain a result richer than the attainment of wealth, or than any worldly success.

III. Finally; I would illustrate the advantages of City Life by observing that it is a great school for *principle.* This topic deserves more labor than I can bestow upon it now, but I shall have occasion to recur to it before I close this series. But the proposition which I would urge at this time, is based upon the truism that virtue is developed only by trial. A city life is a great school for principle because it affords a keen trial for principle. The man who passes through its temptations, and yet holds on, unyielding, to the right,

will be proved as by fire. He will see clearly the supremacy of duty over mere expediency, and will cherish virtue for virtue's sake. I would not imply that there is any condition in life where such trial is not afforded. But, certainly, there are situations, in which compared with the city it is easy to live pure, honest, and noble. The peculiar exposures to vice in a place like this, I dwelt upon in the last discourse. There are other perils in the circumstances of trade which are sufficiently evident. It is difficult for one absorbed in its current, and eager for its success, to maintain the broad sentiment of christian rectitude, and to preserve his integrity. There is in this respect a conventional morality somewhat lower than the standard of the decalogue, into which one slips by a very easy sophistry, and from which he cannot readily emerge. There is the plea of example, and the plea of apparent necessity. It is surely a trial for a man to keep the dictates of conscience fresh and inviolate here, and truly strong is he who in all the entanglements of traffic, can thus enthrone principle in his heart, and who dares to test his own conduct by the clear light of christian truth. But although we talk of the dangers which assail the young man in a great city, and although there *are* dangers complex and powerful, is it best, therefore, that he should never venture

among these liabilities? Or, rather, shall we not show him the noble opportunity there is for true manliness, and bid him enter bravely yet seriously upon the crowded stage, and avail himself of the stern discipline? Let not him nor any other man rush presumptuously into temptation, neither let him shrink from its control, but rather meet it in such a way that it shall prove an advantage. He who avoids the battle of life remains weak and unready, and only he who *contends* for the mastery wins the crown. Nowhere is there a moral battle-field, so fitted for righteous persistence and achievement, as in the midst of the selfish and vicious city.

But not only does it thus furnish an opportunity for moral discipline in its very circumstances, but by the illustrations of the value of principle which are here exhibited. There is, for instance, a sublime and cheering spectacle in the usual *order* of the metropolis. Crime and violence are exceptions to the general rule. The mechanism of society works with beautiful regularity. Each interest maintains its sphere, each right moves undisturbed in its orbit. Human life is safe without any castellated defences, and the richest property is protected by merely a thin plate of glass. The magistrate's staff is as potent as the wand of an enchanter, and the faintest symbol of authority re-

ceives an unreluctant respect. Or if for a moment this order is shaken, and riotous irruption threatens its checks and balances, the instinct of the majority promptly arrests the incipient anarchy and restores the equilibrium. The spirit that controls this great machinery is the spirit of law, but the sources of this law are more primitive than statute-books or courts of justice. They issue from a sentiment deep in the individual heart. They abide in an ideal, loftier than any mere human authority. The safety and the happiness of society, after all, flow out from the recesses of private principle.

Or take the ordinary transactions of business. Although I have said that these are conducted with too much of a conventional and too little of an absolute morality, yet no one can deny the integrity which lies at their foundation, and which is essential to their very life. The radical condition of all business intercourse is reverence for principle—confidence in the sanction that gives credit to the note of hand, and that imparts potency to seal and signature. It is that extends a telegraph of mutual faith around the globe, maintains a bond of communion between men at opposite ends of the earth, and whitens the sea with commerce. Strike away the conviction of the existence of principle, let it be generally believed that men are kept from fraud and crime only by

the sharp restraints of law, and that in the human heart there is no real reverence for the right, and you break at once all the props of society, and stop the wheels of traffic. When, therefore, in every thronged street, in every open warehouse, in every departing and returning ship, the young man recognizes the power of principle, when he sees how the very city itself grows out of it and is built upon it, surely he sees an illustration of it which is nowhere else so impressive.

The value of principle, however, is not only shown here by its implication with the general order of society, and in all the intercourse of business, but by the sad *examples* of those who violate it. Every deed of dishonor, every victim of vice, every ghastly spectacle of crime, is an eloquent testimony to the need and the worth of virtue. Yet, if here, of all places, are the nests of iniquity; if here stand thickest the frowning walls of prisons; if here sin leers upon us with its most odious shapes, and the heart grows sick at unfathomable depths of depravity, here, as from letters of tears and blood, let the young man learn the value of principle. Let him come face to face with these dread samples of city life, to meditate and to pray. Let him stand upon the outer rim of this great hazard into which he is about to plunge, and from the fate of thousands who have

gone before, from the upheaved wrecks of virtue, hope, and happiness that lie shattered at his feet, let him learn that without integrity of heart, pure purposes, and noble aims, he goes upon a venture that is perilous, indeed; but with this steadfast law of principle in his soul, he enters the noblest arena for its trials and its rewards. And surely, if he learns and heeds this law, there is an inestimable advantage even in the worst aspects of city life.

These are all the suggestions upon the general topic of this discourse that time will permit me now to urge. And as I close, let me reiterate the great truth with which I commenced, and which is more important than all the rest, because it comprehends them all; the truth that every position in life has its own peculiar advantages, and the noblest thing we can do is to lay hold of our advantages—is to make our circumstances the glorious agents of good—is to pluck from the hardest conditions the ripest fruits of virtue for ourselves, and to make the place about us better for our presence. For this generous end, then, O young men! I would have you strive in this crowded and busy thoroughfare. The country may have its advantages for virtue, for communion with nature, as well as its negative safeguards. But, wherever we may be placed, in the country or the town, it will de-

pend upon the *spirit* in which we work, whether the agencies about us will become agents of good or of evil. And if we will heed the motives of our own welfare, of social benefit, and of religion, in the midst of the city so often made a mart of selfishness, and a sink of pollution, in the midst of its ceaseless toil and its dizzy hum, its dust and strife and fretting desire, we may build up the fabric of industry, knowledge and honor. With the contact of its multiform interests you may keep ever fresh the best pulses of the heart, and from the varying aspects of your brother-man learn the most generous truths. And in the heat of its temptations, so thick and fervid all around you, you may forge the armor of an invincible virtue. Through all this unceasing roar of business, will be heard the articulate appeal of wisdom "crying at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors"—a wisdom heard and heeded, and fruitful with the blessing of God.

III.

THE CLAIMS OF THE TIME UPON YOUNG MEN.

But can ye not discern the signs of the times?
MATTHEW XVI: 3.

MEN are not apt to recognize the opportunities and the sacredness of their own age. They revere a greatness in the past, and anticipate a glory in the future, of which the present seems quite empty. At least, they are prone to under-rate the possibilities immediately around them. The Pharisees and Sadducees were skilful in detecting the forebodings of the sky, but they disregarded the moral phenomena of their time. Expecting the kingdom of God through outward symbols, they perceived not that it was already in their very midst. Demanding a sign from heaven, they were blind to the embodied manifestation of the Deity. Now the perception of by-gone or of coming eras, as better than our own, may to some extent excite in us penitent emulation or encourage us to more strenuous effort. But we should indulge no barren or sensual conception of the present. We should

not be insensible to any contemporary excellence, or undervalue our privileges. Especially should nothing blunt our sense of personal responsibility in regard to these agencies. Every age filled with its peculiar responsibilities, duties and dangers, rich in its opportunities for noble action, lays its claims upon us all to believe and do accordingly.

But I proceed to remark that young men stand in a *special* relation to their own time. For, in the first place, *they are peculiarly susceptible to good impressions.* They have not grown hardened in the mould of habit, nor become entangled in selfish cares. In them, human nature is yet plastic. The seeds of good resolve, progress, virtue, fly to them winged with fresh hopes. Often, the only remedy that we can descry for present evils, is the substitution of another stock of men. In the coming of a new generation there always opens a better prospect for the world. That prospect may be delusive; yet, when we consider the general current of Providence, we cannot readily believe that it will prove so. Here are unexhausted minds to attack the old problems. Here is an unpledged tribunal before which neglected right may again plead. Here are keen and exuberant faculties for the attainment of truth. And the natural motion of youth may be expected to carry forward the cause of humanity and righteousness.

But, again, young men stand in a peculiar relation to their own time, because theirs, especially, *is the period of enthusiasm.* Theirs is a natural chivalry, which, while it too frequently runs into license, may be efficient for the highest moral purposes. The promptings of noble resolution, the generous love of a good cause, are congenial to their disposition. If young men often spurn all authority, and break beyond the bounds of reason, old men are apt to settle into a selfish apathy or a cynical distrust. If youth lacks the wisdom of experience and the balance of maturity, neither is it wedded to conventionalisms, nor wearied with effort, nor cankered by disappointment and skepticism. We may well believe that these centripetal and centrifugal tendencies are both wisely ordered; that by the effervescence of the young, and the inertia of the old, all that is best is preserved, and all that is needed, attained. To be sure, it is a consummation as much more blessed as it is more rare, to see an enthusiasm which is ripened by experience, to see one whose sympathies the trials of life have not drank up, but only softened with a holier dew. But let us not fail, therefore, to recognize the capacity which exists simply in this spontaneous chivalry of the young, and which gives an elasticity to their efforts that the sober realities of after years will too soon

repress. Allow that in youth imagination does outstrip reason and glorify the horizon with landscapes that will fade away. Allow that life seems richer, and the world better than they will turn out. Allow that the buoyant hope that bears onward the heart must furl its sail, and the generous courage wilt, and the strong right arm prove too weak;—it is better so. It is better that the commencement of the course should furnish such springs of encouragement, or else there would be no motive to enterprise. The dust of noon-tide should not clog the feet of the morning-traveller. The trumpet of retreat should not snarl among the keen notes that summon to the battle. The heart should beat then only with honor. The eye should see nothing but images of victory. Delightful is this enthusiasm of youth, laying hold of ventures which other generations have rejected, or dropped in despair, and bearing them on with its own tidal sweep. Providence often makes this gushing earnestness a fountain of glorious achievement.

But the great claim which any age makes upon its young men, rests upon *the peculiarity of their position.* Every good thing demands their advocacy, every evil their vigilance, from the simple fact that they are the channels through which the past will flow into the future. Inheritors of all that the by-gone time has accomplished, the

beneficiaries of its toils and its sacrifices, bearing in their bosoms its ripened sheaves, they are urged by the deeper claims of gratitude to do the work of duty. Fronting the time to come, and touching the issues of unborn history, possessing an influence that shall throb in the veins of uncreated men, they are urged to this, also, by the most stringent considerations of responsibility. In this light, it is not easy to exaggerate the importance of each young man who hears me. Be his condition in the world distinguished or obscure, he is an electric point from which shall leap some spark of life, some kindling atom in the destiny of the future. Let the world's wealth of truth and moral power at this moment be great or small, it must all be transmitted through the generation that is now coming upon the stage, and their position, therefore, is as important as the aggregate worth of whatsoever industry has wrought, or intellect discovered, or good men done. To encourage great resolutions, then; to speak of a lofty work; to urge the most vital consequences, is, I conceive, no exaggerated conception of the young man's sphere, but a necessary inference from his position in the order of Providence, and the history of the world. It is only saying, you may advance truth and goodness to a point they have never yet attained. You have opportunities for serving God

and man that all the past had not. You have but to resolve, and no mortal mind can estimate your capacity to do. And through you, so far as human agency can act, must proceed incalculable results for good or for evil. And this not by any abrupt difference between you and those who have gone before you; not by any supernatural facilities; but by the natural development of events, and the state of things into which God has now brought the world. "Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

These thoughts then suggest the topic of my present discourse—*the claims of the time upon young men.* But I am embarrassed by the greatness and variety of the subject, which might of itself occupy a series of lectures. I must, therefore, in this, as in the preceding discourses, select two or three propositions merely, to elucidate the general truth which I have been urging upon you.

I. Let me illustrate this truth, then, by observing, that the present time lays a peculiar claim upon young men for *Reverence.* There is no quality in human nature more excellent than this. He who reveres nothing, holds no foundation of principle, and no depth of affection. Of course, he practically recognizes nothing higher or better than himself. God is not a vivid reality to him,

and holiness has no meaning. He discerns nothing awful in the universe, nor in his own soul. He asks no guidance, he despises all law. He is wise in his own conceit. He has no large sympathies. In short, he is afloat upon the flat surface of egotism and instability. He lacks a tenderness and dignity of character for which the acutest logic and the most flashing wit is a poor compensation. All other gifts, without this, leave the spirit attenuated and mean, to say nothing of the wrong which is done to the proper objects of reverence.

But this is a quality in which young men are apt to be deficient. Theirs is an age of headstrong confidence and of self-will. They are disposed to associate the idea of manliness with the notion of exemption from all foreign control. They chafe under advice and mock at warning. They prefer inclination to authority, and license to law. They are quite likely, therefore, to be found on the side of disquiet and resistance. They are the disciples of novelty. They are disposed to consider everything ancient as worn out, to treat old customs and old truths as they treat old fashions, and, complacent in their own polish and adaptedness, they smile at "the wisdom of a past age," as they would at an antiquated hat, or a continental coat.

Besides, their time of life is not favorable to

serious views. They are content with the sensual aspect of things. Their buoyancy of spirit makes everything sparkle with merriment. As yet, they have encountered no penetrating trials. They have experienced none of those inward wants and struggles, which impart a more solemn aspect to the world and to man, which wake up the questions of duty and destiny, which flash upon the soul the great thought of God, and cause us to realize our weakness, our dependence, our need of spiritual help. To them, life is auroral and picturesque. They have not felt themselves tossing upon the great deep of human existence as upon a lonely ocean. The midnight sky with its awful light and shadows, has not yet rolled over them.

But, while I mention this common want of young men in all its bearings, it is that kind of irreverence which induces us to depreciate the past and the old that I mainly refer to under this head. This kind of irreverence is aggravated by the circumstances of our own land and of the present age. This being a new country, as a people we are divorced in many respects from the past. Instead of its venerable monuments and symbols, we have all about us the fresh realities of nature, and the active working of modern ideas. It is the country of experiments—the country of the future. Many of the men, too, who laid the

corner-stone of this nation, were *advanced* men—the pioneers of a coming epoch; while the walls of the fabric were cemented by the blood of revolution. Hence these early characteristics appear in corresponding tendencies. Hence our anti-conservative position. They are glorious and hopeful tendencies, and it is a great thing to carry the banner of progress in the world, and to demonstrate to the perplexed and struggling nations the possibility and blessedness of freedom. But these privileges are attended by peculiar dangers. They naturally foster unjust conceptions of by-gone errors, and more conservative ideas. They excite a lust of change and novelty, and contempt for associations sacred by age and usage.

These, however, are tendencies of the whole age in which we live. It is an age of iconoclasm. The earth is shaken with the tread of revolution. Principles which but a century ago were only the fine-spun abstractions of the philosopher, or the dreams of poets, have sprung up armed men. They are rocking France like an earthquake. They scale the Alps. They shake the imperial throne of Austria. They have swept in glittering files through the crumbling arches of Rome. But stronger even than these, are the moral and intellectual forces now abroad in the earth, and that are embodied in that most frequent

word of the day—*Reform*. And this, glorious as it may be in its objects, and good in itself, has its attendant perils. In the enthusiasm of revolution, men are more likely to destroy than to construct; to work with a fervid and indiscriminating radicalism, rather than in a creative and progressive spirit. They are prone to think more of their *rights* than of their *duties*. They exhibit a confident egotism rather than submission to any external law, and confound all authority with despotism. They would hurl the good and the evil of the past into a common oblivion. In short, no one can seriously study "the signs of the times" without discovering a deficiency of hearty reverence, and of the humble spirit of duty.

At no period, therefore, has it been more necessary to enjoin upon young men the cultivation of this sentiment—to urge them to cherish regard for genuine authority, to acknowledge a higher law than self-will, to confess the good that has descended to us from vanished ages, and to carry forward every work in an eclectic, comprehensive, and devout spirit.

I hope I am not misunderstood. I would not, under the name of *reverence*, inculcate a miserable superstition or a selfish conservatism. I am not decrying this universal movement. I have no

sympathy with those who are offended at the prevailing excitement and boldness; who, as if afraid to strive with these strong elements, sigh for the departed times, and seek to seal up this new wine into old bottles. Who retreat into the dim cloisters of antiquity, where a holy light streams through the stained windows, where the piety of the saints seems to linger yet about their marble effigies, and venerable opinions are represented by Gothic arch and pillar, and who, seeking thus a refuge from tumult and schism, find only there the fragrance and the consecration of "the ages of faith." This, of course, is the opposite extreme. I speak that we may extract the best spirit of the past, not that we should endeavor to exhume its dry bones. We are no further advanced to-day than we have been carried by the current of a wise Providence. I believe, too, that the present is an age of faith, perhaps never more fresh and conscious, and that these reforms are ministers of the gospel. But still, I say, let the young man, who is to transmit the results of our time to the future, sacredly regard all the good he receives in the heritage of the past. Let him rejoice, that through his hands may pass the torch of liberty, of intelligence, of an ever-brightening civilization, but let him not discharge this mission flippantly. If he bears great principles, he also

bears great responsibilities. In spurning despotism, let him not smite at law. In doing what he *would*, let it be what he *ought*. In crying out for "free-inquiry," let him not confound it with moral laxity. In scaling the heights of science, let him not grow bloated with pride, but ripe with humility. In one word, with discriminating reverence—reverence for truth, goodness, God—let him control all his private thoughts and conduct, and so be prepared to heed the indications, and to help forward the work of the present era.

II. The time lays a peculiar claim upon young men to cherish *faith in principle*. Under all circumstances, my friends, we are tempted to abandon abstractions for realities, to sacrifice the right to the expedient. Indeed, if we would always consistently adhere to principle, there would be no such thing as sin, which is but the choice of the evil against the remonstrance of the good. But do we not see that we make this choice because of *moral skepticism?* We lack faith in the right. Thus, men are irreligious because they lack faith in God. They are sensual because they lack faith in immortality and in their own souls. They plunge into the gratifications or seek the interest of the passing hour, rather than the direction of duty, because they trust in the former

more than in the latter. They have more belief in its pleasures than in the stings of retribution.

And yet, the noblest motives of human conduct are drawn from these very "abstractions." The best and the bravest man is the man who, amid all thronging realities of life, endeavors to conform to an ideal rectitude. Those who have accomplished great things, who have stood in advance of the age and dared to rebuke it, and who have overcome the world, have lived from sanctions that are above the world. And as this loyalty to the absolute right has led to martyrdom—not merely martyrdom by fire and scaffold, but by contempt, misrepresentation, and abuse—such will be the result even now, for the days of genuine martyrdom have not yet passed. Let any one persist in carrying out his highest convictions of duty, in social, political, religious action, and he will experience some of the keenest pangs of martyrdom. He will be met with the cry of "abstractions!" "abstractions!" "They can never be carried out," it will be said; "they will not do for this practical, every-day world of ours. We acknowledge that this custom is defective, that that policy is not exactly righteous; but it cannot be helped; things would never get on without such connivance." And so we are almost forced to believe that the right really is inexpedient, that

the good must ever succumb to the evil, that principle must bend to circumstances. But those of us who do say so, who act as if we thought so, lack faith in principle; and therefore no more important duty can be urged upon those who are entering the great theatre of life, than simple loyalty to their best convictions, faith in these despised "abstractions," this lofty ideal rectitude. I believe that the men of the present age need nothing more than this, and for the purpose of illustrating this point, I refer you to some of the aspects of the time.

Limiting our attention to the condition of things in our own country, let me ask you to consider *the characteristics of political action* too often exhibited here. Almost every man, however zealous a partisan he may be, is ready to confess the more than doubtful morality of some electioneering agencies, and the too frequent unscrupulousness of party machinery. What, then, is the excuse for it? Why, that it is an adaptation to circumstances—an accommodation of principles to the prevalent humor of the majority. And so, the dictates of political action are drawn from the reality without, rather than from the ideal within, and the noble battle of right is postponed to secure the advantages of party success. And were it not really a sad spectacle, it would surely be

ludicrous to behold the elasticity of principles when stretched upon the frame of compromise—to see the phantasmagorial transformation wrought by the magic light of "availibility"—while tongues that are blistered with indignation at certain measures to-day, will extenuate them to-morrow with drops of pious honey. To see how cheap a fly-blown consistency is sold upon the shambles. To see those who in every other relation are men of unbending integrity, in this become men of waxen frailty; now prim conservatives, now ranting reformers; now combining the traits of the gentleman and the scavenger, truckling with the basest men, pandering to the coarsest humors and inflaming the worst passions of the multitude. And all this is done in the august name of "*patriotism.*" Patriotism! used to define so many diversities, to justify so many wrongs, to compass so many ends, that its life is killed out; it becomes a dead word in the vocabulary; a blank counter to be moved to any part of the game; and that flag which, streaming from the mast-head of our ship of state, striped with martyr blood and glistening with the stars of lofty promise, should always indicate our world-wide mission and the glorious destinies that we carry forward, is bandied about in every selfish skirmish, and held up as the symbol of every political privateer.

Of course, in these remarks, I speak generally. I do not say this is all that our political action exhibits; that there are no exceptions; no noble and gratifying manifestations; but that with all the rest this mingles too much, too shamelessly. But it is said, a strict carrying out of abstract principles is impossible. There must be some giving way, there must be compromise, there must be political corruption. And again, I ask, why? And I answer, because there is not sufficient faith in principle. There is no reason *why* the abstract right is not made practical, except the fear that it *cannot* be. The circumstances of our time, then, urge a strong claim upon young men to believe in the practicability of the right, and to act up to their faith. This faith sheltered in their hearts and breaking out in their enthusiastic action, would drive these feculent evils from our midst with the sweep of a cleansing rain; would elevate into due importance those great facts which hang in the orbit of our destiny; would give a glorious aspect to our political struggles; make our franchise a solemn right, and christianity and statesmanship one.

Again, consider the enormous *materialism* of our age. The most prominent achievements are physical and mechanical. The results of science are unfolding in grand triumphs over matter and

in the application of its strongest and most subtile agents to the convenience of man. Swift steamships dart to and fro like mighty shuttles weaving nations together. Human thought seizes the electric wire, and spells its meaning with lightning. And every hour rises the din of wheels and hammers, the tumult of the great army of labor attacking all the fortresses of nature and battering at her adamantine gates. Now it is easy to perceive that the tendency of this is to absorb man in an outward and material life, to draw his thoughts away from absolute truths to partial facts, and to make principle in its highest sense less and less an every-day reality.

Akin to this, is the absorbing thirst for money, and the marvellous incitements to that thirst afforded by recent events. Truth and virtue, with their celestial light, are likely to grow dim to us in the glare of this magic splendor. Nothing is more familiar than the fact that such an enormous increase of wealth is perilous to public and to private virtue. Nothing has been more destructive to the vigor, the enterprise, the life of nations. All the force of principle, then, is needed, to counteract these evil tendencies.

Thus do "the signs of the times" indicate the necessity of heeding and acting upon those moral abstractions which even in the most ordinary cir-

cumstances are too little regarded. And no claim is more emphatically addressed to young men, than that which bids them seek the sources of truth and virtue, and fill themselves with their sacred inspiration.

III. Finally, the time lays a peculiar claim upon young men for *Disinterestedness*. I had intended to enlarge upon this topic, as, perhaps, the most important, because the most comprehensive, of all. But time will not permit. Suffer me, however, before I close, to offer a few suggestions under this head. I observe, then, that the radical evil of the human heart is *selfishness*. It is the spring of all individual sin and of all social iniquity. As I have shown, man fails in reverence because he virtually acknowledges nothing greater than himself, and cherishes an egotistic confidence. He has but little faith in principle, because he sees how averse men are to waive a real interest for an ideal right, and he does not heed it himself because he loves gratification better than obedience or self-sacrifice. Selfishness hinders all reform, and opposes its huge inertia to the march of progress long after its sophistries have been shattered to the dust. Intemperance, Slavery, War, what are they but the flowering plants of this interior sin? In short, no generous sentiment, no deep spring of moral life can be touched until we force

into the human soul the conviction that no man lives to himself alone; that this world is not a place where we are to eat and sleep, to gratify our wishes, and to scramble for our own good, and die without one unselfish thought of others. Christianity is not known in its sublime depth, until we perceive that its central truth is disinterestedness.

What is the cross sprinkled with the Redeemer's blood, but the purest illustration the world has ever seen of self-sacrifice? What was that Divine Life but a life of self-sacrifice? Conceive the Redeemer as living only for himself, using his miraculous powers to convert the stones into bread, or gold—exerting his extraordinary influence over the multitude to lead them to conquest, employing his profound knowledge of the human heart to play upon its springs for sordid uses,—shut up in his own plans, and making the world the theatre of his gratification. The idea is utterly abhorrent as it is placed in connection with that benignity and universal love, as we call up that radiant face of mercy bending over the sick, that arm of ever-ready help lifting up the lame and weary, those fast tears falling over the city that rejected him, and prayer in behalf of those who pierced him. And yet, my friends, too often is it the case that wealth, knowledge, and power, have been the objects of men; and the world has hon-

ored them for the attainment. I ask, Has it been the ideal of Jesus, or the ideal which I have suggested in contrast, that has been the most eagerly sought and admired? Oh, not yet, perhaps, for nineteen centuries will men love and comprehend and imitate the former, the ideal of disinterestedness. This, this, is the great want of the present age, for if this were cherished and practiced, the social evils as well as the individual sins around us, would disappear. Encouraged as I am by the peculiar characteristics of young men, I urge upon them this virtue. Let this great truth be impressed upon you, that no one is placed here merely to live for himself, that we have vital relations with other men, that we are bound to seek their good, their elevation, their salvation, as well as our own. Look out beyond yourselves, beyond the circle of your own interests. Learn to sympathize with humanity in all its forms. Love God, and from this sublime affection you shall catch a spirit that will make your lives, humble and obscure as they may be, rich with blessed deeds, and fragrant with good influences. By all the impulses of this spirit of disinterestedness, by the examples of those who have endeavored to practice it, by the study of that One who presents us with its fullest manifestation, now, in your fresh manhood, learn that there is something

better than riches, or fame, or even knowledge,—namely, that spirit which seeks to serve others, and to pour some benefit into the present and future ages.

I would say this also because of the "Signs of the Times." It is a period when universal ideas are beginning to prevail in all departments of human thought. Science is expanding its limits far beyond our powers of calculation, and bids us look up from this atom of earth to the immensities in which we are embosomed. Every day we rise from particular facts to broader and higher laws, and we see the whole form of things knit together by glittering bands of harmony. I have spoken of the dominion which man has gained over the material world by mechanical agencies, so that the whole earth has become a neighborhood, and the electric pulses of human sympathy are beating around the globe. All this is calculated to lift us up from ourselves, to expand our aims, and to show our connection with other men. And the doctrine which Paul taught on Mars' hill—the doctrine of human brotherhood — is obtaining utterance and practical application. All these things are calculated to inspire the hearts of those who are to inherit and carry forward the results of this age, with a noble sentiment of universality and self-sacrifice.

But it is essential that young men should cherish this sentiment, on account of their very position. They are the recipients of all the past. They inherit its best results. They enter largely into the labors of other men. Receiving, then, in their own experience, such a rich witness of the truth that no one liveth to himself, let them make a generous application of it for the sake of the world in which that heritage has come to them, and for the sake of that future to which they must inevitably transmit good or evil.

And let no one deny his influence. The arena of his action may be obscure, but its results are incalculable. He may secure no posthumous fame, but he contributes an imperishable element to the common stream. Young men, touching the issues of the future, and upon whom the burden of the present is about to rest—young men placed in this favored land and age, cultivate a large disinterestedness, a spirit of sympathy with man, quickened by love to God! Although this may have its differences in degree, in kind it induces the best works that even the greatest can perform, and we may thus be co-workers with the noblest of earth, and with Christ himself.

I have thus offered a few suggestions as to the claims of the time upon young men. It may be thought that there are others more important even

than these. There is, for instance, a claim for *intelligence*, but this is so self-evident that it needs no illustration. And there is a claim for *religion*, without which no other form of excellence can be sustained, or will be but a form. This is a topic so essential that it requires to be discussed by itself. It will, therefore, constitute the subject of the following discourse.

IV.

CHRISTIANITY THE PERFECTION OF TRUE MANLINESS.

——Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,——

EPHESIANS IV: 13.

THIS language is used by the apostle metaphorically, as an illustration of the growth of the Christian Church—its progress from an elementary, or infantile state, to spiritual maturity. But the words are equally appropriate when applied to the operation of Christianity upon individual character; and in this sense I propose to employ them at the present time. I intend to speak of *True Manliness*, and to show the necessity of Religion to the perfection of that state.

I. First of all, then, I would say to the young man, that it is necessary he should conceive the *importance* of true manliness; should entertain the conviction that such a consummation is requisite, and worthy his best efforts. For, whatever

view of human nature we may adopt, there is something glorious in being a man, and in endeavoring to conform to the ideal of a man. Beside all that we can accomplish or acquire in this world, our very being is an inheritance which should inspire the noblest aims and receive the most assiduous care. If man has been placed here as the most evident manifestation of God; if the Creator has moulded for him the most exquisite of material organizations; if he has been endowed with the faculty of intelligence and the prerogative of moral sense; if, in short, he has been made "but a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor," then ought he to conduct himself accordingly. While he laments the poverty of his achievements, he should not disparage his gifts, and however poignant his self-rebuke, he should shrink from nothing more than self-debasement. He should not confound gentleness with timidity, nor self-distrust with inaction, nor humility with meanness. But with a sacred enthusiasm he should resolve to be true to himself, to the integrity of his own soul. He should determine to push each of his faculties to its full development and yet to bind them all in a mutual order, and, whatever the phase of outward future, to build up the symmetry, the permanence, the intrinsic power of a genuine manhood.

In thus recommending the idea of true manhood, I trust it is not necessary for me to describe minutely its constituent elements. Speaking generally, I would say, that he is a true man who realizes the dignity of his nature; who is loyal to his best convictions; who controls his passions and appetites; who is guided by his reason; and who blends a noble mastery of himself with a filial dependence upon God, and who *is* greater than anything that he has or does. All this implies a strict self-discipline, knowledge, and piety; a balance of opposite traits and a combination of different virtues, which I have not time to hint at.

But it needs no elaborate description. True manliness, however rare in practice, is well understood and universally admired. The world renders spontaneous homage to incorruptible integrity, to generous enthusiasm, to a conscientious and steadfast will, to a good heart. It honors the true man whether he stand in high places or in low; whether he rebukes the encroachments of despotism or breasts the flood-tide of popular passion; whether he proclaims his loyalty to truth with the earnest tongue and the free act, or signify it in chains; whether he be the peasant-soldier, exchanging the reaping-hook for the musket, and hurling defiance to tyrants in the forlorn-hope; whether he be the merchant referred to as a symbol of rectitude

amid all the temptations of traffic; whether he be one of "nature's noblemen," poor yet honest, possessing nothing but the free soul and the diligent hands that God has given him, yet fulfilling his humble station with a majesty that shames the glittering rottenness of conventionalism. Surely every one feels that there is such a thing as being simply a man, borrowing no greatness from circumstances, but lending greatness to them; self-sufficient, like the shaft which is equally impressive when shooting up among the pinnacles of the city, or standing alone in the sands of the desert, neglected, and bare, and shattered by the thunder.

This quality of true manliness, then; this inherent worth of character, I repeat, is a conception that should be especially clear in the mind of him who is entering upon the theatre of life. Let the young man realize, first of all, that to be a man in the best sense of the term, is a loftier object of ambition than anything that he may *acquire* as a man. Let him consider that whatever he may lack, three things he has—a mind that he may enrich with unlimited culture, a heart that he may keep fresh with generous affections and make strong with lofty courage, a will that may overcome almost any obstacle and maintain every right; in fine, a nature that may be filled with exhaustless power and with ever-increasing life.

And as standing in the amphitheatre of fancy, of hope, he looks around upon the world as a dominion which he may conquer—as he sees spread out before him its gardens of delight, its busy marts of enterprise, and its pinnacles of honor, and in his youthful confidence feels as if the choice depended only upon his will, one thing let him resolve—that he will be a man, and let him do nothing that is not accordant with this end.

II. But I observe, in the next place, that perhaps the young man does not so often fail to have some conception of this quality of manliness as he does in having a *correct* conception. Indeed, there are few things more potent than the desire to be a man. The very child, in his own fancy, has already outrun all leading-strings, and feels older and taller than any of his mates. He apes the habits and longs for the costume of one-and-twenty. And the most vivid of those day-dreams that are woven with the tissues of reality and romance, is a vision of manliness, but it is manliness after the fashion of the ballad and the story—it is manliness in a fairy-world, or amid scenes of oriental wonder. According to this conception, to be a man is to be like Paladin or Bayard, inspired by chivalry or saluted by a continuous procession of adventure; or like Philip Sydney,

with "thoughts high erected in a heart of courtesy," leading the hosts to glorious battle, and crowning death with a generosity more illustrious than bravery; or like Drake, or Raleigh, sailing through unknown seas, finding strange lands, and coming home in ships fragrant with torrid spices and burning with bars of gold. And although this is not the manliness of our real world and of this nineteenth century, there is in it an up-gushing vigor and generosity which would give hope that experience and culture might at length turn them to better conceptions.

But while they are the conceits of childhood and youth, worse errors in regard to true manliness ensnare those who stand more immediately in contact with the actual world. In the mind of one that ideal is fulfilled in a compound of boisterous self-will and impudence. To be a man is to show his independence by doing as he pleases, to spurn all advice from others, to laugh at all religious considerations, and to run the round of dissipation. To be a man is to drink and swear, to be ready with obscene jesting, and to gratify licentious appetite. It is to have nerves so hard as not to be afraid of sin, and a heart so weak as to be ashamed of repentance. It is to swagger in bar-rooms by day, and to reel through the streets at midnight. It is to wear a flash dress and talk

in flash language. In short, it seems as if this idea of manliness were an experiment to see with what a bold air and fantastical humor one can concentrate all the energies in him to the purpose of transforming himself into an animal, or a liquor-cask. For surely I do not exaggerate this idea of manliness if I depict its natural concomitants, and do not stop to specify occasional modifications. I say, as to many young men, that their notion of manliness is merely the idea of animal courage and sensual gratification—is simply the idea of what is called "a fast man," "good-hearted" as some term it, but casting off all moral restraint, and living in the indulgence of every appetite.

Again: there are young men who entertain still another idea of manliness—in whose conception it consists in the acquisition of wealth, or power, or popular reputation. He is a man, they think, who makes himself felt by the weight of his purse, the force of his abilities, or the extent of his patronage. So, they strain every nerve for money, or political success, or literary renown. Now, no doubt, this struggle develops some of the noblest traits of manhood, but there are others which it hinders and contracts. In the intense pursuit everything is absorbed which interferes with the master-object. The best sympathies are

checked or become hackneyed. The purest principles of action are paltered with and betrayed. In his graspings after wealth, everything conforms to the base conception. And even in accumulating knowledge, it may be, he neglects the finer intuitions of truth—the love and faith without which wisdom is barren.

But sometimes the young aspirant does not achieve even the manliness which is developed in the struggle for wealth, or fame, or in the intense pursuit of any master-object. For sometimes his ideal is the Man of Fashion, riding on the top-wave of exclusiveness, basking in luxury, encompassed with the most delicate amenities of civilization, caressed and adored, faultless in dress, demeanor and equipage, and too often one who cuts up life into petty niceties, who is ashamed of outright hearty nature, letting in the sunlight through painted glass and scenting the air of heaven with rose-water, suspecting vulgarity afar off, repudiating his honest parentage, and crying "Corban" to his relatives—a grafted aristocrat, almost as good as any who have sprung from the root, and as proud of the patent ichor in his veins as though it were "the blood of all the Howards." In this case, the consummation is generally anticipated. The desire outleaps the means. The ideal of manliness spins by us with the splendid equi-

page and the fleet steeds, glows at the banquet, is exhibited in the gorgeous establishment and the round of expensive habits, and over-soon meets its climax in a crash of pecuniary destruction, shattered credit, and incurable mortification.

We see, then, by these illustrations, that the young man is not apt to lack an idea of manliness, but the true idea. Of course, he has some notion of this quality. He feels that he has arrived at man's estate, and should adopt some corresponding course of conduct. But, if he would set before him the highest ideal, where shall he look, not only for the end to be attained, but for the principles of action by which it may be realized? I answer, to Religion—to Christianity —and this brings me to the essential point in this discourse.

III. I maintain, then, that *Christianity is essential to the perfection of true manliness.* In the first place, I would show that it is so, by alluding to its representation of those virtues which in our estimate of manliness are apt to be disregarded. Christianity lays peculiar stress upon such qualities as patience, meekness, disinterestedness,—graces which, perhaps, we would call passive. But, in the common estimate of manliness, we are prone to consider, almost exclusively, the daring and active qualities of human nature. We call vigor,

and shrewdness, and boldness, manhood, and overlook these others as weak or feminine. When we speak of a man, we call up before the mind's eye an image of hardihood and energy. But these qualities may co-exist with imperiousness, imposture, and cruelty, with anger, revenge, and the most insatiable selfishness. There can be no true manliness without gentleness, mercy, and love. There is only superficial strength in him who can do but not endure. There is no greatness of nature without a universal sympathy. Show me a true man, and you show me one whose noblest traits are of this milder kind—whose strongest qualities, in fact, grow out of these so-called "passive" virtues. His large knowledge is the reward of a profound humility, his conscious freedom the consequence of a child-like obedience. He can overcome the sternest obstacles, because he has learned how to suffer, and in the out-flowing of an unselfish love he exercises the agency of unlimited dominion. His courage is the fruit of faith, and his meekness and long-suffering impress us with a sense of exhaustless power. In that simplicity, patience, and piety, there is the calmness of an unfathomable depth, the ingathering and consummation of the mightiest forces. Yes, in a ripe and symmetrical manliness, these more salient qualities are tempered and har-

monized with those more tender virtues which we are apt to consider as especially "Christian." Courage is always greatest when blended with meekness; intellectual ability is most admirable when it sparkles and burns in the setting of a modest self-distrust; and never does the human soul appear so strong as when it foregoes revenge, and dares to forgive an injury.

In urging these virtues so emphatically, then, Christianity urges the most essential qualities of true manliness, and illustrates their importance and glory. He who would live worthy the highest purposes of his being, must study its examples and drink deep of its gentle spirit.

But, in showing the necessity of Christianity to the perfection of true manliness, I propose to advance beyond this point. I observe, therefore, that not only does it furnish the illustration and the sentiment of the more gentle virtues, but it is in reality a vital element in all that is boldest and strongest in human character. It is an error to suppose that religion is unfavorable to vigor and fullness of nature. We are apt to conceive it as something which detracts from manly strength, and which renders us less fit for the labors of the world. To some extent, this may spring from the fact that we have regarded with peculiar attention those more gentle qualities of Christianity to which

I have just alluded. We have considered its kindly precepts and its womanly tenderness of sentiment. We have conceived it as peculiarly calculated to produce amiable dispositions and transcendent views, to make men loving, pure, and childlike. But we do not sufficiently consider it as calculated to make us manlike. It would seem that there is in many hearts a distrust of Christianity as a system for every-day affairs, as an educating principle for common life. We conceive it as a religion for the closet and the cloister —for woman in her trials, for children in their tender years, for old men broken down and weary and about to die, for the day of sickness and calamity, for clergymen, for timid and melancholy persons—but capable of little application in the din of the street, the hum of the market, the agitations of the caucus, the debates of the senate, the iron mechanism of the great practical world. This is a vital mistake. For of all strength of character, of all spiritual force, Christianity is the main spring. A glance at facts is enough to show this. For where are human energies the most active and the best developed? Where has science achieved its grandest victories? Where have invention and art and civilization unfolded their richest results? In Christian lands, and under Christian influences. There is nothing so

calculated—nothing but this *is* calculated—to give power and adaptation to human character, to develop real manliness. This fact I propose to urge under the last head of this discourse; though I select only two or three points for the purpose of illustration.

IV. I refer you, then, to the fact that Christianity furnishes an essential element of true manliness in its great work of *self-discipline*. It matters comparatively little what may be the original force of any character, or the splendor of a man's natural gifts, for these do not constitute manly perfection where there is no moral order or control. He who is ruled by his appetites is not a man, but a slave. He who cannot restrain his passion is weak though he wield the sceptre of Alexander. He who has no inward retreat from outward ills, is indeed naked and defenceless. He who holds no fortress of principle in his soul, no supreme law of right, no fixed sentiment of holy obedience, is as the man who built his house upon the sand. In short, whatever may be the qualities of any one, or his achievements, there is no true manliness, if in his nature the best is not the highest, the spiritual superior to the sensual, the good victorious over the evil. Can we conceive anything more pitiable, for instance, than a man overcome by the gusts of his own anger; his

wrath bubbling up until it drowns reason, splits his speech into an impotent shriek, and scalds only himself? And yet, perhaps, he is a man of good judgment and usual dignity of character. But all his manliness is dwarfed into a mere toy, a humming-top, because he lacks self-control. Here is another who is the embodiment of good-nature, frank, generous, and daring. Everybody notices the hearty manhood of his nature, and loves him. Yet this very good-nature is his destruction. He cannot say "no" to any proposition, however absurd or sinful. He is too good-natured to rebuke the wrong, or refuse joining in it. His easiness sags down into a slip-shod virtue. His manhood is made of wax—it has no stamina. He is swept away by his own pliable disposition—ruined for want of an inner rule, a fortress in the heart. Here is another whose faculties are of noble proportion, rich in wealth of intellect, of lofty courage, and not without a deep spring of moral feeling. But he cannot resist the promptings of appetite. He is like a little child before temptation. And one by one the locks of his strength are shorn away on the Delilah-lap of indulgence. Who has not witnessed again and again the mournful spectacle of one who might have stood up, and all the world have owned "here is a man," casting down his gifts into the dust and

the mire? He lacks the royalty of a man, the sceptre of self-control.

Yes, everyday history is crowded with incidents of youth starting out upon the course of life, furnished with the richest promise of success, before whom opportunity opens like magic, and whom fortune woos with her choicest gifts. And yet, after a few years, you ask for such a one and they tell you that he lies a wreck by the wayside of life. Or they tell you how they bore him, young as he was, with the loathsome seal upon his lips, and the untimely shadow upon his brow, to a dishonorable grave. Without the principle of true manliness, his gifts were but swifter facilities of destruction.

I say, then, there is no such thing as real strength of character except as the product of self-discipline. It is the work of Christianity to make duty supreme over inclination, and each element of our nature to act in its proper orbit. Under its influence the soul becomes self-sufficient, superior to circumstances, and draws an irresistible energy, a clear, celestial light, from its own inner fountains. He alone who has been trained by this religious discipline is fitted for the issues of life, and possesses that exhaustless, evident power, which is always characteristic of true manliness. There is no standard for this quality short of "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

But again, Christianity is essential to true manliness because it inspires *moral courage.* Perhaps there is no trait in which men are more deficient than in this. There are those who will face the jaws of destruction, sooner than meet the sneer of ridicule, or the frown of popular disapprobation. There are many who would rejoice to die on the deck of carnage, or on the bloody field, who dare not carry out their convictions of rectitude in spite of cliques, customs, and the world. Indeed, there are those who have not the courage to be true even with themselves, who dare not probe their own natures to break up the fond repose of habit, and to tear away the evils of motive. Thorough truthfulness—truthfulness to others and to ourselves—is a rare virtue. And he who indeed acts upon it is the noblest of all heroes. Of course, when I speak of moral courage—when I speak of a man who dares to stand up for his ideal of the right—I keep in mind the humility and gentleness with which these should be joined. Some men may have a reputation for moral courage that belongs only to a love of eccentricity—their boldness is not so much in a righteous constraint as in the love of provocation and a saucy tongue. But a genuine loyalty to truth that dares to speak it and live it, is one of the grandest features of manhood. And this virtue does not always require a

prominent theatre of action. Nowhere, indeed, is it needed more than in the common arena of the world, in the intercourse of traffic and of friendship, in the heat of political action, and in matters of religion. Time will not allow me to dwell upon illustrations, but to the young man I would say, seek and cherish this. In the first place love the right, and then dare to maintain it. Whatever qualifications of manliness you may possess, without this you cannot abide the trials of life. Without this you will fail of some lofty attainment, you will betray some meanness, you will falter at some important crisis.

And if you seek for the sentiment of moral courage—for the spring of its inspiration—you can find it only in the depths of religious conviction. If you would know the true heroes of the world, those who have stood up before it in the full stature of manhood, those who have dared to speak, live, and sacrifice all things for the truth, and who have given

"Glorious chase to persecution,"

you will find them in the archives of Christianity, in those sainted ones who have owned its authority and felt its influence, and who have been reformers, missionaries, martyrs, in its behalf. With their achievements how poorly contrasts the glory of martial heroes who have gathered laurels under

the sulphurous canopy of battle, and bound dripping with blood about their brows. These heroes were pricked by a loftier courage, and encountered sterner dangers. They saw before them an incredulous and irritated world, and that was their field of conflict. In the call of hungry multitudes, in the wind booming through the shrouds of the storm-tossed ship, in the murmurs of the Athenian audience, in the shouts of the Ephesian circus, they heard the awful trump of duty, and that was the incitement by which they marched. They believed in the Omnipresence of God, and that was their tent and their shield. High above the front of peril, high above the tumultuous waves of trouble, they beheld the *sign* the eastern monarch saw—and by that they conquered.

If we descend to more modern arenas and to more common life, we shall find the truest heroes of every-day acting under the same influence. And we can share their manhood only by communion with his spirit, who, in doing his great work, confronted death and bore his own cross, and so "in the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God," shall we come "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Finally, though this point has been anticipated, I remark that Christianity furnishes the great

essential of true manliness, in *religious faith.* This quality is essential to the other two which have been mentioned. Without it there can be no self-discipline, for in order to this there must be an apprehension of something higher than the appetites, and more authoritative than the senses, and there must be that spiritual perception which detects "great principles" in "small duties." Moral courage, too, springs from faith in truth—from the steadfast conviction that there is something permanent and absolute in the universe. Skepticism furnishes no element of doing or of daring, it never overthrew a wrong institution or founded a state. Faith, too,—the confident looking for more truth—delivers us from the evil of a dwarfed and narrow mind, and we may confidently affirm that it is as necessary to a truly great intellect as to a good life. Thus is this element essential to true manliness, inasmuch as it lifts us above an epicurean unconsciousness, a narrow dogmatism, or an atheistic denial. And, not only as the life of these other qualities, but in itself is it essential to a real manhood. It is that power which inspires us with a transcendent trust, and leads us to a divine communion. It makes us superior to circumstances, and enriches us with treasures which are beyond the influence of time or change. It pours light upon the mingled allotments of life,

and transfigures death. Considering its power against the severest ills of the present state, so sublimely illustrated in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; considering the victory which it achieves over temptation, considering its work in the temper of the holiest lives, considering the visions which it opens to the soul, the ideals which it sets up therein, and the energies and graces with which it imbues our whole nature, considering, moreover, what humanity would be without it, we may say that the prime requisite of all manliness is faith—religious faith —"the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God."

And, while thus I have endeavored to show the essential elements which Christianity contributes for the perfection of a true manly character, I would not leave this statement of the importance of religion, as though it were simply a matter of fancy—as though its claims consisted merely in the accomplishment which it imparts. But now, in closing this brief series, I would lay before your minds the whole interest of religion. I would urge upon you the solemn appeal which it makes from the aspects of life, from the Word of God, from the realities of the spiritual world, from the wants of your own souls.

With peculiar interest, my friends, must I regard

you. You stand at that critical period of life when you are taking the reins into your own hands, when the props upon which you have leaned are dropping away from you, and the counsel of others is apt to be too lightly spurned. A little while ago, and you slumbered in the safety of maternal arms—a little while ago, and you were environed with the influences of the home and the school. Now you are stepping forth in the great world to show what you are in yourselves. And I know of nothing by which that trial can be successfully made, except the inner life and guidance, and the spiritual help from on high, which we call religion. You need its life, its experimental power in the heart, in all the conditions upon which I have now treated. You need it in order to escape the snares of vice; in order to realize your position in its dangers, responsibilities, and opportunities, in order that you may heed the claims of the time, and to develop a true manliness. You need it for the sins that beset you, the duties that call you, the trials that will come upon you. I beseech you, then, by all these motives, by all that commends to you your own true welfare, the requirements of God, and the love of the Redeemer, to realize its importance, and to accept its terms.

Many of you have seen those four pictures which represent man's course down the stream of

Time. The deceased artist has appropriately represented youth as just setting out from the shore. The angel that had been standing in the prow of the boat, is leaving him to his own guidance. He has taken the helm in his hand. His eye dances with hope, his breast heaves with confidence, while before him in the hazy distance loom the shining pinnacles of fame. Soon he will be abroad. Soon he will be drifting down that glassy, mystic river, along those varying shores, among those caverns, and beneath those thunderous clouds! Who, at witnessing such a scene in real action, would not feel his soul stirred with a hope, a fear, and a prayer! My young friends, that is your position. God grant that you—that all of us—may possess the true strength and guidance as thus we sweep along, so that we may escape these flowery deceits, those sharp and fearful rocks—so that if we are spared to reach that fourth period of bent frame and withered hairs, when one by one the hours drop from our time-worn bark, and we find it settling down upon "the dim, unsounded ocean of eternity," we may look up calmly at angel-faces that await us, and feel that death and circumstance have plucked away no real good; for in ourselves we bear the essential treasure, the richest freight of our "Voyage of Life."

V.

MORAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands."
PSALMS VIII. 6.

THIS declaration qualifies the contrast between man and the universe in which he dwells. That contrast is the first suggestion that naturally arises upon taking a survey of the starry heavens, and the wide reaches of space in which we are embosomed. And if, in the age of the Psalmist, it struck the mind with astonishment and awe, how much more under the sweep of modern science! Turning from the vision of the telescope, with its revelations of inconceivable time and distance, and countless systems, and majestic laws;—turning from all this to the aspect of man, whose entire field of action is but a speck among these immensities, and the history of all whose generations appears like a stream of sparkling vapor trailing only for a moment across the sky, how natural is it to exclaim, "What is man, that Thou art mind-

ful of him, or the son of man, that Thou visitest him."

And yet this immense disparity cannot conceal the fact that Man *is* cared for, and visited, and richly endowed with glory and honor. And we find the explanation of this fact in his relation to an order of being superior to the forms and forces of the material world. From this he derives his dignity, and in this is comprehended the purpose of his creation. Physically, he is but an atom in space, and a pulsation in time. Spiritually, the entire outward universe receives significance from him, and the scope of his existence stretches beyond the stars. Leaving the materialist to explain the attitude of Man upon the earth, and to bring all the facts of the case in agreement with his hypothesis if he can, I pass to consider the illustration of this spiritual and christian conception, which is afforded by the text.

It declares at once the superiority of man over the outward world; and, whatever mysteries may be involved with his life, it proclaims one specific purpose for which he was created—"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands!" It does not say that this is *all* that man was made and placed upon the earth for. And yet, my friends, I think we shall find that, in the profoundest and most comprehensive sense, this *is*

the complete end of his existence in the present state. Dominion over the outward world, over the forms and forces of matter,—hence come the glory and honor with which God permits him to be crowned. Through this he manifests the nature of one made "a little lower than the angels." In fact, all the significance of his being is unfolded in proportion as he *masters* things around him. He only appears peculiarly as man, the ascendant of this lower sphere, and the heir of a higher, as he subdues it to his use, transmutes it into the forms of his thought, and transfigures it with institutions. Any mode of human action is to be pronounced excellent, in proportion as it develops this mastery. The most inspiring records of history are those which chronicle such triumphs. In the rudest forms of creative industry they reveal the distinction between human nature and the brute, and its relations to the Divine. They exhibit man, the *inventor*, turning shapeless matter to instruments of utility and power; employing the winds, harnessing the flame, and mating his will with the lightning. They represent man, the *artist*, dissolving the gross forms into pictured symbols of beauty, and drawing from them a perpetual melody. They show us man, the *discoverer*, ever pressing into the unknown, stretching his measure from planet to planet, or from system to system,

until constellations and firmaments, in the grasp of his thought, are reduced to unity, and harmonized by law. They tell us of man, the *civilizer*, expanding savage rudeness into enlightened polity, and, from age to age, leading on the glories of enterprise, and knowledge, and religion. In fine, I repeat, the points of special interest, in his individual or his social capacity, appear in the acquisition of a power for which he must often stoop in humility—a mastery which he must win by service.

Any period or event, therefore, which peculiarly illustrates this dominion of man over the forms and forces of the material world, must have a *moral significance*, because it illustrates also the meaning of his existence upon the earth, and the plan of Providence. And this is the connection which exists between the statement of the text and that Palace of Industry, whose doors were opened the past week. It contains the trophies and celebrates the triumphs of labor—the victory of human skill over matter. Nature stands there, like some gorgeous and vanquished barbarian, ministering to every conceit of its conqueror, and surrendering its treasures to his will. And as one gazes upon those products of toil and shapes of art, transported from the four quarters of the globe, wrought by the loom and the anvil, dragged from the

quarry and the mine, stamped all over with man's image and superscription, surely the first expression that springs to his lips is this: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands!" This was the expression of that grand, impressive ceremony, with its dignitaries and its multitudes, with its banners and towering plumes, with its fervent prayers, and its choral hallelujahs swelling over all. It was a recognition of the mission of man upon the earth, and an appeal to God for the legitimacy of labor. It was felt to be something in which the most jubilant pulsations of the human breast might fitly blend with its most solemn devotion. It was not a holiday show, merely to amuse. It was not a festival of passion. It was not a celebration of destructive victory, and of man's supremacy over man, by fire or flood; but of constructive achievement—of man's supremacy over nature, by the strength of his sinews and the sweat of his brow. It was the coronation of toil, enthroned upon its implements, with the symbols of use and beauty in its hands, and the dignity of aspiring manhood gleaming on its dusky forehead. It was a reiteration of the acknowledgment already given by the present age of the preëminent honor which belongs to peaceful industry. It was a confession of the blessing which was wrapped up in the primeval curse. It was the

distinct articulation of the ringing hammers and the moving wheels which have accompanied the march of the race for thousands of years.

In embodying the forms of labor represented in that Crystal Palace, I have spoken of *use* and of *beauty*. And it should be remembered that each of these is a legitimate method of man's mastery over the outward world. We shall most surely miss the significance of such an exhibition, if we regard it as a mere show, and seek in it only that which allures the eye and pleases the taste. If we propose to make a *moral* estimate of labor, and to carry it up to its Divine intention, we must not overlook any contrivance which is calculated to assist man in his needs and his efforts. We must place foremost in value the implements of solid use. For while the essence of all misery is in absolute idleness, and man would be wretched indeed if set free from all necessity for toil, whatever limits that necessity, and lifts him above material drudgery into an opportunity for bodily relaxation, and for the exercise of his higher faculties, is surely a manifestation of the law of progress. It is not merely the wonderful ingenuity of the human mind that we should admire in such instances, but the evident intention of that Providence which, while it has ordained that man shall acquire dominion only through toil, does not

mean that he shall be the bond-slave of nature, instead of its master—or fettered to any one kind of work. And this is the general solution which I adopt of the perplexing problem: "What is to be done with the poor, if these labor-saving machines are multiplied?" "What is to be left for human fingers, when almost everything that man can do is accomplished by one of these inanimate, yet strange and almost conscious agents?" I say, no general development of this kind ever induces general suffering in the end. There is, doubtless, a Providence in it, lifting up the entire mass of humanity to a higher level of existence, and to other kinds of effort. So, welcome, first of all, every implement of use, that helps the tired hand or the aching eyes, that facilitates the results of labor or limits the periods of drudgery; for here, indeed, is manifest the dominion which man is appointed to achieve over the outward world!

But equally in fault is he who, in such an Exhibition of Industry, turns away with contempt from everything that is not useful, according to his definition of that term. For really, my friends, the truly beautiful is useful. And no man needs this kind of help so much as he who ignores it; whose conception of utility is limited to the bounds of a coarse, material interest, and the service of the senses. Why, what does he think of this vast

Palace of Industry all around him, with enamelled floor, and its star-sprinkled dome, where the Divine Intelligence, working for illimitable ages, has mingled the materials of use with the expression of beauty? What does he make of the contributions which Summer brings to this great Exhibition, of the upholstery of the sunset, and the tent of midnight? Does he not wonder that the leaves should put on such pomp for the dying year, and that such useless things as flowers should line the traveller's dusty way? The justification of the beautiful is in an instinct of the human mind which allies it to the Divine: if man has wrought a curve of grace, or fixed a tint of beauty, it has been copied from that perfect handiwork which transcends all his ideas. And, surely, that which is an instrument or an expression of the finer faculties of our nature, must be at least as closely allied to the great purpose of obtaining dominion over outward things, as that which enables us to get along in the world, and to master its rougher obstacles. In studying the Industry of all Nations, then, and the results of all kinds of genius, let us recognize the beauty of use and the use of beauty, and, in both these forms, the Providential Purpose and the dignity of that labor by which man gains dominion over the material world.

But I proceed to remark, in the second place, that this is not merely a dominion of manual force and dexterity. It is an achievement of *Mind*,—it is the triumph of *Intelligence*. The Crystal Palace, whose doors have just been opened, exhibits the results of sweat and muscle; of patient, plodding, superintended toil; and does honor to these. But it illustrates something greater than these. It represents *Ideas*. It expresses not only the material result, but the abstract process,—not only the invention, but the inventor's *thought*. Oh! it is but a meagre result to gather from the present opportunity simply the impression of wonderful achievement, or bulky force—an impression of the workshop and the factory—of files and hammers and huge engines. Think of the shadowy images in the conceiving mind that preceded all these forms! Think of the inspiring *ideas* without which these forms had never existed! Think what a filmy conceit the ship once was, and the steam-engine, and the glorious printing-press! Out of bodiless thought were evolved these instruments of use, and these shapes of beauty. Out of silence and abstractions leaped these thundering forces that carry the wealth of nations, and change the face of epochs. What courage, what patient experiment and meditation; what martyr-pains of poverty, and ridicule, and

disappointment, stand away behind these noble implements! What distant reaches of human effort are linked together here! The coarse utensil upon which you hardly deign to look, is the result of some fact plucked in the loneliest paths of intellectual exploration, and beneath the familiarity of Art are concealed the sublimities of Nature. And here, my friends, is the real force by which man conquers the outward world. He obtains the dominion not by the strong muscle, or the diligent hand, but by ideas. The bee and the beaver can construct, but they do not invent. They build as they built thousands of years ago. But man, continually inspired by fresh conceptions, is ever changing, ever improving, ever making nature more plastic and submissive. The Crystal Palace, therefore, not only illustrates the Providential dignity of labor, but the power of ideas. And such must have been the thought of every reflecting person who witnessed that inauguration. Not merely the assembled fruits of industry, but the entire spectacle, the rejoicing multitude, the starred bunting overhead, the flags of many nations floating in peaceful harmony, the Fact itself,—all were the triumph and expression of certain ideas. They were the expression of thoughts, truths,—endeavors that have long been working in the earth. In short, this is an exhibi-

tion not merely of the world in its one phase of industry, but of the actual civilization of the world at the present time,—it shows what ideas are busy or uppermost in our age. And if this is the case, surely there is pregnant moral significance in this Crystal Palace. Regarding it in this light—regarding it as a fit representative and embodiment of the time—what does it show the character of our age to be? Speaking generally, I observe that it indicates a *conflicting* and *undecisive* period, involving great evils, but with a growing and emergent good. Almost all the prominent features of the time, so strikingly exhibited in this Palace of Industry, have this perplexing quality,—this mixture of great good and evil. As the first thing that may be specified, it shows our age to be one of *vast material achievement.* It is quite unnecessary for me to dwell upon this fact, which it is the avowed object of this exhibition to illustrate, and which is so broad and evident upon the face of the time. Never before was there such an age of invention—of wonderful discovery, of science, applied to the most minute and common uses. Other generations of men may have been equally ingenious and more skillful. Could the departed nations of antiquity return, and bring *their* contributions to the Crystal Palace, they might astonish us with an extensive illustration

of the maxim that there is "nothing new under the sun;"—shaming our boasted superiority with specimens of their lost arts, and refuting it with their forms of inimitable beauty. But that which may have more than equalled us in symmetry and in expression, shrinks before our achievements of comprehensiveness and universality. Ours are inventions which overleap the barriers of nationality, and weave together the interests of the race. Ours are agencies that lift up the man, and subjugate nature for universal man. We hold the elements with reins, and the humblest laborer is ministered to, and carried by servitors that make the pomp of old Cæsars contemptible. What was the chariot of POMPEY, or CLEOPATRA's barge, compared to the rushing car in which the poorest may ride, or the steamship mingling foam and fire? What grandeur in this universality of material agencies? How mean and discreditable the old prejudices and limits begin to look! What a set of uncouth dissolving views the armed sentinels and the walled towns! How the one blood of all nations of men begins to flow together! What reciprocities, what unities, as the world becomes more and more like a single organic body, with the steam-engine for its beating heart, and its nerves of electric wire!

But, my friends, these material achievements

may not be triumphs after all. We may be corrupted by the very powers we have conquered, and instead of obtaining the mastery over them, be absorbed by them. I am sure we must see the danger of this, when we consider the luxury and the sensuality of the time. Probably in no other age, in no other place, has there been deeper corruption, or a more complete surrender of the highest faculties of our nature to the forms of outward and gross living, than in this very city, that so fitly bears upon its breast the Crystal Palace, as a type and expression of modern civilization. The achievement and the tendency, the glory and the peril, are involved with each other. And while we gaze upon these costly ornaments, these delicate shapes, these instruments of rare invention, and admire the industry which they represent, and the skill which they display, we must also recognize in them the agents of temptation and the ministers of luxury, and tremble as well as rejoice at this expression of the times.

But, again, regarding the Crystal Palace as representing the Civilization of the Age, we see what are the present position and relations of the *Industrial Classes*. I have said that the festival of the last week was the coronation of Labor; and so it was—and doubtless Labor is honored,

and its dignity is recognized in this age as never before. But, my friends, it is one thing to honor Labor in the abstract, and it is another thing to recognize the claims and allow the rights of the *Laborer*. Men may make a kind of mythological impersonation of Industry, and express a great enthusiasm for it — just as they do for national architecture, or interesting poverty, or any other romantic conception—and yet recognize but very feebly the humanity and the interests of the drudge or the craftsman. It is a fine thing to erect a Crystal Palace to represent the Industry of all nations: but I would like to have seen there a representation of the Laborers of all Nations. I would like to have had them line the galleries, and look down upon the spectacle from that magnificent dome. I would like to have had them come—the men who have served before the furnace, and been blackened by the smoke, to make those rich utensils, and the women whose heart-strings have been sewed into the fine linen and embroidered on the silk. I would like to have had them come—from the factories of the free North, and the plantations of the South—from the mines and garrets of England —from the workshops and labor-fields of every land. I would like to have had them come, to show us what our civilization makes of them—to

show us much, no doubt, that is cheerful and encouraging; but much, also, proving that it is a different thing to honor Industry, from what it is to honor the toiler. Nay, the coming of many of them there into the midst of that intelligence and beauty and fine array, with their limbs scarred by steam, and their foreheads blackened with smoke, and their uncouth looks, and their outlandish garments, would, no doubt, have been accounted quite an intrusion upon the respectabilities of the time and the place. And I must accord my assent to what one of our journals has said of the real incongruity of that opening scene. At the inauguration of Industry, almost every class was honored except the real workers themselves. There were plumes and badges, and white cravats there; scarcely any of the sunburnt foreheads and the hardened palms. And this shows how thoroughly still our civilization is entangled with old absurdities and conventionalisms.

When the conception which the Crystal Palace illustrates shall be fully realized, these feathers and bayonets and professional respectabilities will not be so exclusively in the foreground, and we shall honor the achiever as well as the achievement. And that conception will be realized. The *Doers* are to be honored.

But, once more, looking upon the Crystal Palace as a mirror of our present civilization, we certainly discover much to cheer the Philanthropist and the Christian. It illustrates great progress, peace and unity. Ships of war cover their batteries with graceful symbols, and bring tokens of world-wide amity. The time seems millennial to some. There may be, there must be, conflict. Yet we see by passing events how hard it is to excite war. But, my friends, if this is expressed in this great Temple of Industry, consider for a moment its concomitants. Cast your eyes over the neighborhood of that beautiful structure; observe its dens of vice and sinks of woe. These, too, are a part of our civilization. They are licensed, permitted, patronized. This illustrates what is yet to be done, and the kind of warfare yet to be waged.

You see, then, what a conflicting, mixed, indecisive epoch ours is, if we take the Crystal Palace as representing the prevalent and the active ideas of the time. And yet the good is emergent, increasing. Such an exhibition would not have been possible fifty years ago. It enlarges our ideas of Christianity in the world. It teaches patience and faith. Truth and Righteousness do not break forth in sharp and sudden shocks. Secretly they work down in the deep heart of

things, leavening the lump. Gradually they proceed, like the issues of the morning, in which we detect no sudden crisis, in which we hardly observe the transition, until bye-and-bye, in place of the shadows and the cold gray mist, lo! a clear, transfiguring splendor rests on the mountains and the sea. Man has been placed here to have dominion over the world;—the dominion of Truth and Goodness, and not of mere force. Silently these conceptions have worked in the soil of events, until now we have this beautiful Palace of Industry,—a flower unfolding out of the ages, rich with the vigor of good men's progress, and brilliant with the coloring of their lives,—and yet itself, we trust, but as a bud and prophesy of far finer and better results.

But finally, my friends, I detect a still deeper significance in the spectacle of the last week, and in this Palace of Industry. There is a dominion over the outer world mightier still than that which is achieved by the strong arm, or the intelligent brain. It is the dominion, in the highest and deepest sense, of a human soul through effort and thought, and all the discipline of life, until it is made strong and complete in itself, freed from its bondage to the world, and its dependence upon it—freed from the power of its seductions or the terror of its ills. It is the chief end of our being

upon the earth—it is the great victory of which all others are symbolical. And if I have said that the great purpose for which Man was placed here, was to attain dominion over the outer world, this is not inconsistent with that end of self-conquest—that inmost triumph which this victory implies;—for that stern and intense struggle which we have in our own hearts, what is it but a conflict with matter? Indeed, I do not know that the philosophers were very far astray when they placed evil in matter. The specific moral lesson which this Crystal Palace tenders to us is this:—that there is nothing without us that is not, comparatively, unsubstantial. We look upon those forms of beauty and implements of utility, and ask, for what end is all this?—why is man to toil and achieve?—there must be something beyond all this—can Man be satisfied with this mere outward splendor? Would all the riches displayed beneath that dome of glass enable him to walk through the temptations of life, and prepare him the better to meet Death? What is it, if there be not a great object to be attained beyond all this toil and struggle? Cast your eye around that glorious array, and if you look at it in its moral significance, it teaches us that there is a great end in life beyond merely toiling and achieving conquests over Matter. It

teaches us that though we are placed here to toil and to suffer, yet the conquest that most befits us to struggle to achieve, is a conquest over ourselves, that we may become better and stronger Christians. And it tells us that Man can break through material limits, and, by the grace of the Divine Spirit in his soul, press forward to higher activities, and a closer assimilation to God himself.

VI.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF REFORM.

THE most potent word of the present day—the word that is most significant in its meaning, and extensive in its influence—is REFORM. Often abused, often misapprehended, the delirium of the monomaniac, the mock-word of the ignorant and the heartless; yet, in some sense, every mouth utters it, and every soul is thrilled by it. It is spoken fearfully by the timid *conservative*, who crouches in the shadows of the past, or arrogantly assumes that all goodness is enshrined at the altar where *he* worships. It blisters the lips of the narrow *fanatic* who, vaunting boisterously of freedom, is the slave of a deformed idea. It is discussed by indolent, good-natured men, who philosophize in easy chairs, and, sitting at their tables of abundance, fervently hope that no one starves. And it gushes up from free, strong souls, whose feet upon the mountains bring messages of joy, who have wrought in the night-time

with faith and prayer, and who, looking forth upon earth's wide millions, bid them take courage and rejoice—for yonder kindles the rising day.

But now, let us consider seriously, what is the idea that lurks under this word *Reform*. Is it a legitimate idea—an idea founded in the nature of things? And, again, what *is* reform? Is it a principle which as philanthropists and christians, we can adopt, and strive, and hope for? The discussion of these questions will furnish what we have to say at this time upon THE PHILOSOPHY OF REFORM.

And the first thing that I shall advance, is the fact that reform, if not innate, is at least an indwelling principle in the soul of every man. There lies there a presentiment, often dim and unheeded, it may be, yet a presentiment of *something better*, an idea of a *greater good* to be obtained, which renders him dissatisfied with his *present* state, and urges him to seek another. I have used a word here which I wish to convey a precise meaning. *Presentiment;*—not a hope only, not a mere wish, not a phantasy; but a revelation of what lies beyond us, given in glimpses sufficient to show us that *something is there*. We may not say that the soul first reaches out after that—this might be a self-created delusion; but *that* first reaches out to the soul, and so

it is a *prophecy*—a shadow, it may be, yet a shadow *of things to come*, a shadow that falls from actual and external objects. And, I say, this seems to be, universally, an indwelling principle in the human soul. Your primitive man, who seeks to clothe his nakedness, though it be in the undressed skin of the wild beast that he has just torn from his lair, or to build him a shelter, though it is only a bark hut,—he acts upon this idea of reform. It seems a wide interval between such a condition and our refinement and civilization, yet every stage of that interval has been passed through *gradually*. But why should man take the *first* step, without this idea of something better, this presentiment of a practical good? And when the first step was taken, why would men take the *second*, and the *third*, and so on, without a repetition of the idea? And how would men keep progressing, if this idea were not in constant action, ever urging them forward! If human progress is a truth, that progress is according to a *law*, as much as the march of the waters, or the evolution of geological changes is according to a law. And this law is found in the idea of *improvement*—in other words, in the principle of *reform*. If as a race of beings we are made to progress, how can we do so unless we alter *existing* institutions, and seize upon *new* and *better*? If every

custom, or opinion, is suffered to remain precisely where it is now, we shall be stationary; or, rather, we shall retrograde, we shall grow worse—for the spring of health is *action*, and our life becomes tainted and stagnant if we do not *move*.

Moreover: this principle of reform accounts to me for many of the evils that lie around us. The vegetable world is limited in its development, and soon arrives at perfection. But in the world of *mind* it is not so. No perfect uninspired man has yet appeared on the face of the earth. No perfect state of society has yet existed, save in the dreams of Plato and Sir Thomas More. And what we have received has been all conflict, uncertainty, darkness mingled with light, the evolution of a better state of things only after a painful struggle —and then, perhaps, a retrograde movement, or a stationary period, which has discouraged men who trusted in the good and the true, and given occasion for others to say—"there is no such thing as human progress." But this has all been wisely ordered. The tree has grown up at once to a perfect tree, because beyond its own mere *being* there was no ulterior object to secure. But for man there *is* an ulterior object to secure, beyond his mere existence. He is not only to *be* but to *know*—not only to obey laws, but to become "a law unto himself," and he can only do this by

experience and by *labor*. So he must have something to undergo, he must have something to overcome. If that which he needs comes directly to his hand, he makes no effort to get it, and therefore no strength is developed in him. If there is no obstacle to overcome, no danger to brave, then there will be no self-confidence, which depends upon our consciousness of possessing powers, with which we cannot become acquainted until something occurs to call them into exercise. So it is well that man is not *made* perfect, but that he should *grow* to perfection. He finds the good, by passing through the evil, and appreciates it. The weak sinews become strong by their conflict with difficulties. Hope is born in the long night of watching and tears. Faith visits us in defeat and disappointment, amid the consciousness of earthly frailty, and the crumbling tombstones of mortality.

But you perceive that the key which explains all these hieroglyphics of evil, is the principle of reform. If the world of mind, if man and society, grew up in each age as they did in the preceding ages, exhibiting the invariable sameness and the limited development of the trees of the forest, then our individual and social evils would be inexplicable. We might well ask—"why was not the moral world created perfect after its kind,

as the vegetable world is created perfect after its kind?" But now, the enigma is solved. There is given to man a principle of reform. He is made to *learn*, to *know*, and to *progress*. He is not merely to *be*, like the zoöphyte and the oyster, of which we can say that they have sense, and that is all; but he is to *do*, to *create*, to *enjoy*. Poor earth-worm as he now seems, he is to become a UNIT in God's world, as distinct and as complete as a star. From this defiled organism, writhing with pain, marred by passion, heel-trampled and neck-yoked, are to be developed—by labor, by battle, by prayer,—an ever-growing *intelligence*, and a quenchless *love*, that shall *mean* something and *possess* something in the boundless universe of the Deity, when the trees may no longer grow, nor the rivers run, nor the stars shine, because they shall have fulfilled *their* mission and passed away.

This principle of reform, then, is a legitimate principle, because it is that which urges men to contend with existing evils, which evils appear to exist, as one great object at least, for the purpose of creating energy and virtue—for the purpose of exciting ideas and establishing principles, which, if not all immediately practical and useful, are necesssary to the development of the perfect man. Accordingly, we find whenever reforms are agitated, that great questions are always raised,

discussion is held upon the most vital interests of humanity, the distinction between right and wrong is clearly brought out, men throw themselves back upon *principles*, they abandon temporal institutions for eternal ideas, they go behind the formal letter to the living spirit. All of which is by no means unaccompanied with evil. We shall have vagaries enough. Optimism and ultraism; theories spun with hairs; schemes of primeval innocence that provide not even a fig-leaf; speculations that *look* gorgeous and symmetrical, but that shall vanish when we seek to touch them "*un*-miraculously enough," as Carlyle would say, because they are made out of cloud-land, and glitter with the prismatic colors of fancy. Yet all this goes to establish what I have said;—that there is a legitimate function for the principle of reform, which is the great idea that urges us to contend with existing evils, and to seek a good that as yet lies beyond us; and these very evils exist in order that the good may be suggested. And when men are roused by them to action, they will, naturally, discuss the right and the wrong of things, and very naturally go too far, and entertain crude notions; and, by the law of reaction, pass from one extreme to the other. It is a natural consequence that the opposition, the ultraism, and the indifference, to which I alluded in the commence-

ment as being rife in our age, should now prevail. Owing, as I think, to the diffusion of knowledge, to a better perception of christianity, and to the quick communion of thought that abounds, the present age is what it is — peculiarly an age of reform. And as it is now, it has always been in the world's history. Wherever reform has been agitated, there always have been those who have set themselves against it as the fruitful germ of all evil—those who have perverted it, and carried it into the worst excesses—and those who have stood lazily by, and *wished* it well, without moving one pampered limb to aid the work. But our's, I say, is *peculiarly* an age of reform—an age of far-reaching, intense effort. Never so has the great cause of humanity been pleaded—never so have men looked below the formal, the time-serving, the vestments of things, to central and primary ideas. Never with such bold and confident hands have men laid hold of existing institutions; and though, with the *true* that will stand amid all the shaking, I believe that much that is *false* must yet stand for some time also, still I think that glorious and beneficial results will grow out of this mighty agitation. And I am not afraid because of the *evils* that accompany these things, for I know that they naturally appear; they are the concomitants of every period of reform. I know that ultraism

and passion, and sensuality and selfishness, are mixed up in all this commotion. I know it is likely if some proposed reforms were realized in their present shape, we should have a Pandemonium, instead of an Eden. I know that mere abstractionists, as they sow in dreams, will reap shadows. I know that it is idle to suppose that every man who broaches something novel has therefore got something good, or that every little clamorous *clique* is formidable, and based upon some important idea. But I say, once more, these are the attendants of every reformation, and with all their fermentation and all their shams, they prove that a great reality is working at the bottom;—they could not be, did not that reality exist. Of all the great reforms of our day, I know hardly of one, that, freed from the imperfections of individual judgment, and reduced to its fundamental idea, is not based on righteousness and truth.

Thus we see the legitimacy of Reform. It is not a *sin*, like anarchy—it is not a *delusion*, like fanaticism. It belongs to the nature of things. It is likely to urge its claims and to agitate society, so long as evil and imperfection exist. The only difficulty is to define Reform—to ascertain its true limits, its legitimate work. The veriest Conservative in the world may say—"Well, I believe in

Reform;" but the movement that is taking place never happens to be the Reform that he believes in. The wildest schemer answers that he goes "for nothing but Reform;" although he brandishes his torch over a magazine that at the first explosion will blow up him and thousands more, and shatter, perhaps, the whole framework of society.

We are led, then, at this point, to discuss our second question—*What is Reform?* I answer to this, that Reform comprises both the ideas of *purification* and of *advancement.* Purification implies a restoration to a normal condition, or a remodeling of what we already have—but not the addition of any thing new. In order to purify, we may have to go back, instead of forward—back to a primitive state of things, and instead of increasing our possessions, may have to reduce their number. But this alone does not include the whole principle of Reform, since there must be not only an abolition of what is wrong, but *advancement*—advancement in what is right, and true, and good. We must ever acknowledge the stern necessity of circumstances. These constantly bind our attention to *present* wants and *future* requirements, and are ever placing man and society in new positions. We may avail ourselves of experience, but we cannot

go back into the Past to act. This earth will carry us and ours along with it, as it moves in its enormous orbit. And we are carried forward as much in *time* as in *space*. We leave the old landmarks of history, and come into the new fields of experiment—into a sphere that calls for new action. It may be true, then, that in some instances we must go back, but we go back only for *principles;* we must look around us, and look forward, for the application of those principles. We do well to strip off encumbrances, our corruptions and absurdities, and get back to the naked truth, since that always remains the same—but, when we arrive at that truth, we shall find that it needs to be applied to new circumstances. We may find the self-same truth our fathers used—a truth that we have forgotten, or have never known; but we cannot act upon that truth just as our fathers did. The primitive state of man may have been a state much more innocent than that in which we are now living, but if we reform our present condition, strip it of its vices and perversions, we cannot live in all things just as the men in the primitive state lived. Purification, then, inasmuch as it implies only an abolition of existing evils, or a restoration to primitive truths, does not comprehend the whole principle of Reform.

Another idea, then, comes in here—the idea of advancement, growth, progress. We must purify but we must also *increase*, we must abolish but we must also *build up*, we must repent of wrong but we must also *grow in righteousness*. We know not all truth yet. Our fathers did not know all truth. The top of their Babel was not half so high as one of God's own mountains, and *we* can scarcely see beyond Sirius, or, at best, some dim nebulæ that hang upon the threshold of the firmament. New manifestations burst upon us almost every day. In the hallowed light of memory lies the truth of the *past*, but our eyes look into that gleaming vista that opens through the horizon before us, and we hear the voices of Prophecy saying—"Forward! Forward! much is yet to be revealed." And if we would have a true Reform, I say, we must seize the *new* truths as they come, and apply them, as much as we would preserve the *old* truths and apply them. Man and society need not only to be purified, they need to progress; and that is the true Reform, which, purging them from mighty and hoary evils, impels them forward with glorious developments.

We see, then, that in every true Reform, there is a *conservative* and a *radical* element—a *restorative* and a *progressive* principle. Of course,

then, the strict Conservative and the strict Radical are both wrong—he who would cling to everything, and he who would uproot everything.

My objection to the strict CONSERVATIVE is, not that he holds back in the tide of Reform, but that he holds on to all things just as they are—and not merely to the *good* that is in all things. He loves existing institutions because they happen to exist, and for no other reason. He loves old customs because they *are* old, and he is very comfortable under them. Too often when we come to analyze his conservatism, the whole reason of it is found in sheer, downright *selfishness*. He hates to be disturbed. If the movement prevails he must move too, and he dislikes the exertion and the sacrifice. He has got a snug corner of the world, and ample means to live, and surely, he thinks, the world is well enough as it is. It is natural that *he* should think so. But the poor bondman, who labors in blood and tears, thinks that the world is *not* well enough as it is, and it is evident that there must be some other criteria than the convenience of one man, or of one class of men.

Or, if the Conservative is not selfish, he is an alarmist, and as much deluded as the veriest fanatic. He exercises no discrimination. Every plan that is proposed to alter existing institutions,

to him looks heretical and dangerous, because he will not set himself to work candidly to investigate the matter, but sees through his prejudices, and acts from his old habits of thinking. At the mere mention of the word *Reform*, vague ideas of unsettlement and confusion rush upon him; he sees all things in chaos—nothing but licentiousness and destruction, blood and flame; and, honestly, scared, no doubt, he vociferates from the very depth of his lungs—"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" This, you perceive, is all clamor and assumption. There is no idea either of *purification*, or of *advancement*. All things must remain as they are, for they are as good as they can be. And, moreover, there is evidently but little knowledge of, and therefore no confidence in, Truth. The strict Conservative says that Truth is in danger. It is the idlest fear in the world. It plainly indicates no intimacy with the truth. He who has communed with great principles, knows that they are everlasting, and that nothing can shake them from their orbits. He may deplore the licentiousness that stalks abroad in the name of liberty. He may wonder at the delusion that runs through the multitude like a contagious disease. He may mourn over the licentiousness and the sin that must take place ere the world shall secure the right and the good—at the bitter

draught that men must drink ere they find the pearl of experience that lies at the bottom. But he has no fear for the truth. They who are alarmed, lest the world should be turned upside down, have but little reverence, and little faith. They fear man, more than they trust Omnipotence. The world turned upside down! Why, the world is hung upon a balance. Man cannot move it. With all his engines, with all his subtle inventions, he cannot move it a hair's breadth. And this, because it depends not upon mechanical forces, not upon the law of gravity—but because God hung it there!

My objection, then, to the strict Conservative is, that he allows no movement, either forward by way of *advancement*, nor backward by way of *purification;* but wants all things to remain as they are, which nature will not permit, since by her laws all things *move* in some way, either in growth, or decline. And I object to the Conservative, because with all his fears for Goodness and Truth, he evidently knows but little of either, else he would exercise more discrimination, and while clinging to the *good* would let the *bad* go, and thus be a Reformer—and, also, he would be willing to trust truth in every encounter, knowing it to be eternal and omnipotent. I object to the Conservative, because he has no faith in progress

—he too often acts from a selfish motive—he consults not his *reason*, but his *fears*.

The Conservative sometimes employs ingenious arguments to defend his position. But I deem them fallacious. He says, that he is willing to grant that society is somewhat out of joint, but, he asks—"how do I know that you will better these things? Your experiments," he says, "may be dangerous. It is a fearful thing to tamper with the existing order. Your medicine may prove but a quack nostrum, and that which you give to cure, may only aggravate the disease." To this I answer, that we must act in such cases as we do in other matters. Because we sometimes fail, we do not therefore hesitate to make other experiments. Everything good and great is wrought in such trials—it is a law of our being. In this matter of Reform we must trust reason and common sense. We must believe our eyes and hands and intellects. We may be assured of the correctness of a principle, of the truth and right of a plan, if we will. We can tell whether the bridge that shall cross the stream is safe or not. If it is made of straw it evidently is not —if made of wood, or stone, or iron, it probably is. The old quibble raised by Hume, as to how we know whether an article presented to us is what it appears to be, is more ingenious than

sound; if we halted upon it we should soon stop the machinery of practical life. Although we may be often cheated by the false and the vile, we intuitively know the true and the right —for the true and the right will be recognized and found to be the same the wide world over. Experience furnishes us with many criteria, and reason will supply many more. We must not be rash; we must not adopt everything as it comes, but compare, reflect, examine—and fear not the result. And is it not better even to move at a *risk*, than not to move at all? This Conservative argument was as valid countless ages back, as it is now. And if men had heeded it, the race would be now where it was countless ages ago. But they did not heed it. They took a step forward—a step at a time, to be sure—but still a step forward, even though it was in the untried path of experiment. I do not like the legitimate bearings of this argument. It will do as well for the Grand Turk as for the professed Republican—it will serve the high Tories of England, as well as any Conservative in this country. Enough, that reason decides after calm reflection. Enough, that all that intuitively recognizes the Good and the True, appeals in our bosoms. Enough, if we have these, to venture forward, even hazarding by experiment the issue which, at

the worst, can produce evils scarcely more aggravated than those which already exist.

"But," says the Conservative, "I have no faith in this doctrine of *Human Progress*. It is a chimera; to speak more coarsely but pointedly, it is a humbug. The race, to be sure, seems to advance at some points—but at other points it has retrograded; and I do not know, after the account is figured up and the balance struck, but that it is best to let all things remain pretty much as they are." Now let us clearly understand what is meant by *Human Progress*. It must be distinctly separated from the doctrine of *Human Perfectibility*. That men in this world will ever be, in all respects, perfect, is one doctrine—and that men will pass from lower degrees of excellence up to higher, and *maintain their advantage*, is another doctrine. This last is the doctrine of Human Progress. That our age holds an amount of refinement and civilization that preceding ages did not have, seems evident. We may not see minutely how this operation of human progress goes on—we may not be able to trace the transfusion of the good and the true through every particle and member. But we see the *grand result*. So the great ocean comes on imperceptibly. Men build their huts at the foot of some huge mountain, and till the green fields that spread out before

them—thinking nothing so permanent. But, by-and-by, *other* men come that way, and the green fields are all gone. The summer fruit has long since been gathered. Where the husbandman found his wealth, the fisher draws his support—where the sickles whispered to the bending corn, the ships of war go sheeting by—and the old mountain has become a gray and wave-beaten crag, a landmark to the distant mariner, and a turret where the sea-bird screams.

But this was accomplished *imperceptibly*. One generation may not have witnessed the advancement of the waters—another may have passed away without noting it; but slowly they kept advancing. And by-and-by, all men saw it—saw the *grand result*, though they did not mark each successive operation. So with human progress. One age may scarcely perceive it, and another may die without faith in it; but we must take some distant period that is not too closely blended with our time, and compare that with the present, and in the *grand result* we shall discover that there has been human progress.

Still, some may say, "Yes, there has been progress, but not over the whole world—there have been salient points, but also retreating angles, and when you speak of *human* progress you must appeal to the world at large—say, has *that* ad-

vanced?" I answer, that in the world, somewhere, there has been a constant tendency to advancement. Even the dark times have been seasons of fruition—the middle ages nourished and prepared glorious elements of human reformation. If one nation has lost the thread of advancement, another has taken it up—and so the work has gone forward; if not in the race, as a whole, at any one time, yet *in the race somewhere.* But the race is fundamentally the same, and what may be predicated of a portion of mankind as belonging essentially to humanity, may be predicated of the whole, and so in the advancement of a *portion* of the race, the *whole* becomes hopeful. *The capacity of the race for progress has been demonstrated.* Is that capacity never to be gratified? Though the period never has been that all the race were at the same time on the same level—who shall say that the time never will come? That it never can come? Who shall say, so long as the capacity exists, how quick the transfusion of what is excellent in one portion may be made through the whole? A victory over the formal Asiatic, grim and bloody as it is, may be one agent of such transfusion. A triumph of machinery may help to accomplish it. The steam-car may carry truth and light over drifted deserts and frozen mountains. The march of opinion, aided by circumstances,

may penetrate to lands that never knew the commerce of Phœnicia, or the wisdom of Athens—where Alexander never ventured with his hosts, and where Cæsar turned back his eagles. This is the main point—not *universal* progress, but *human* progress—not progress *everywhere*, but progress *somewhere*. Grant but that, and all humanity becomes hopeful—grant but the capacity, and the doctrine is practicable—let the law be in operation only at one point, still it is a *law*, and as such is to be heeded and acted upon. Old notions may die, but new notions shall spring up. Let the *principle* be at work, and no one can limit the result. It may take a longer sweep of ages than have yet passed over mankind, to bring all nations to the same point of advancement; some nations, now here and now there, may always be in advance of others, yet if the others advance also, the great law will be in operation. And no people shall have lived or died in vain. Into the deepest sepulchres of the Old and the Past a new life shall be kindled, showing that they have not waited so long for nothing. Dim Meroe will shout freedom from beyond the fountains of the Nile, and the stony lips of the Sphynx shall preach the Gospel!

At least, let me say to the Conservative, that if there is progress where he stands, he is bound to

act upon that progress. His croaking is of no worth at all—his action may at least accomplish some present good. Grant that, in the end, it shall come to naught. *Now* it is progress, *now* it is improvement. Let him strive to promote that improvement. Enough, that the age in which he lives, and the people with whom he is associated, are asking for light. Let him admit the light, and not speculate, as to whether the light will go out ages after he is dead. Let him not peer through all the corners of the earth, and point to all the sleeping nations, as an argument why his own should sleep also.

With this I dismiss the Conservative and his arguments, and pass to consider the strict RADICAL, who, I say, is also wrong. He who wages war with all existing institutions, is as bad as he who holds on to all existing institutions—perhaps worse. There is always some good to be preserved. To think otherwise, is to calumniate the past, and deny the Agency of Providence. In order to reform, it is not necessary nor practicable, to level all existing institutions to the dust at one stroke, and drive the ploughshare over them. If they do not actually think so, there are some men who speak as if they owed nothing to the Past or the Present—as if these were naught but hindrances to human progress. But if I un-

derstand progress, it is the *gradual* passage from one condition to another, each link in the chain being necessary to the consummation. If human nature grows, it must have something to grow out of, and therefore it is indebted to that something. Your reform will not create itself, nor will it be born mature, nor can it be produced in the impalpable air. You must use what exists in order to build up what shall be. If you strike away every vestige of the past and the present, upon what will you stand for the future? No—no—you cannot get out of the world in order to move the world. You must stand upon this old firm earth *just as it is*, and try to make it *better*. The plant that shall blossom unto an immortal flowering must assimilate to itself elements that have been winnowed in the storms and changes of the Past. The harvest of human effort, and hope and prayer, will spring up in the furrows of by-gone revelations, out from the embers of sin, and the ashes of martyrdom, and the soil of blood-soaked battle-fields.

To the strict Radical I object, moreover, that if he does not actually seek thus to destroy at once all existing organizations, he often does what amounts to the same thing. He attempts to introduce principles and institutions that are impracticable, because they are fitted for an entirely

different state of things, for an advanced era of humanity, for a golden age, a time of perfection. But between our present state and such an elevated condition, a wide space intervenes. Every inch of ground, between this point and that, is to be trodden gradually. His Reform is impalpable, because it does not connect with what has gone before—we cannot reach it from where we stand – and if we would advance to it, we have nothing to advance upon. It is premature, and, not regarding the Past and the Present, is the same as if it rejected them. I think that many radicals are of this class. There are some, I presume, who disgrace every attempted Reform—who seek to overturn all things, in order that they may gratify their revenge and their lusts. But these are vile men, who do not listen to reason. But, I say, many are of the class to which I just alluded. They are virtuous but dreamy. They speculate too much. Their philosophy may be very good, but they want common sense. Their logic is sound so long as we confine it to abstract principles, but it cannot stand the ordeal of stubborn *facts*. We may hope for the future, but we must act in the present. We cannot forestall nature, nor renovate society by steam.

Again;—your Radical is frequently a mere grumbler. His sole function, in that case, seems

to be *finding fault.* He has a shrewd wit, perhaps, and cultivates a sharp satire, which are often effectual, and sometimes amusing. It makes us laugh when he shakes some respectable old rottenness, or when decently-clothed sin winces at his punctures. But, after all, this is an unamiable and unprofitable function. It is the easiest thing in the world to find fault. It requires no great power to pull down, or to pick in pieces. He who takes away without giving something instead, performs no grateful office. If you take from a poor man his ragged cloak, and give him no other clothing, he will hardly call you his benefactor. Now the true Reformer not only removes the bad —he gives us something better. He has not only "a torch for burning, but a hammer for building." At least he will have pity for the evils that he cannot help, and, while he bears them with meek humility, will ever look forward with hope and faith. The fault-finding Radical knows not the true spirit of Reform. This seeks to build up, to develop, knowing that in this way evil is best destroyed. It will not pluck the crutch from the cripple—but will seek to heal his lameness. It will not undermine the faith of childhood's simple hymn, but will anoint its lips, and teach its faltering voice to flow in deep and sweet hosannas.

But, let me say further, the Radical often manifests a bad spirit. He talks much of philanthropy with his lips, but his heart cherishes bitterness. He speaks of reason and kindness, but as often vociferates and declaims. He complains of persecution, but is very intolerant. He is boastfully confident of the strength of his opinions, but frets and fumes if any one opposes him. He professes to love the race, but denounces the world, because it misunderstands or will not believe him. He is as busy, and as spiteful, as a wasp. This is not the spirit of the true reformer. He is calm and mild, mighty against sin, hurling burning truths at every wrong, but still preserving, amid it all, a loving heart. He is fearless and unfaltering—he presses right on with his mission; but he does not court persecution, or pray for martyrdom. He is contented to let truth bide its time, and is careful that he does not injure it by rashness and impropriety, as much as by sluggishness or denial. He will not be angry if men do not believe him at the first announcement. He is contented if he may only preach the truth, for he knows that once scattered abroad, it can never die. It may not blossom until long after he is dead—but what of that? The summer rains and winter snows shall work for it; and, long after his voice is hushed, and his eye dark, his very dust shall nourish it—

for it will blossom at last! Such is the *true* Reformer. You see that the rash and angry Radical differs in much from him.

I find, then, in strict radicalism, as many objections as I do in strict conservatism. The one holds on to all things, the other would destroy all things—the one will not move at all, the other moves too fast—the one is too complacent, the other too dissatisfied—the one denounces all who go from him, the other is angry with all who will not come to him.

But now between all this there is a *middle course*, in which a true radicalism and a true conservatism combine. There *is* such a thing as REFORM. We have seen that it is a legitimate principle ever working in the souls of men. The errors and woes with which we are surrounded, are not meant to abide. This reign of blood and violence—is it destined to last forever? These shams that appear on dusty parchment, in feudal distinctions, and legal wrongs, shall they not one day dissolve and pass away? Absolute Conservatism is false to our better nature, to our hopes and our capacities. But this true Reform works by a law of nature, and, like all nature's laws, is not to be accelerated, or counterfeited. Slowly must the work go on—yet it will go on. It is life, it is reality—dreams and speculations are not it.

The Good, the Good alone, it labors to secure—the Good that is in the past, the Good that is in the future. It labors to remove evil by *purification* and by *advancement*. It holds on to the hallowed that has gone before—it reaches out to the true that is to come. The spirit of true Reform, neither too fast, nor too slow, both conservative and progressive, may be described, with a slight alteration, in the words of Goëthe:

> "Like as a star
> That maketh not haste,
> That taketh not rest,
> Is it ever fulfilling
> Its God-given best."

Thus, my friends, I have given you some crude ideas upon the Philosophy of Reform. I thought it would not be uninteresting, nor unprofitable, to analyze somewhat, that about which so much is said in our day—concerning which so many exaggerated hopes and groundless fears are entertained. Let us not be anarchists—let us not be alarmists. Let us be Reformers—that is, upbuilders; neither absolute Conservatives, nor absolute Radicals, but laborers for the Good wherever we find it—having faith in Reform. Let us not suppose that our age can do everything, or that men are about to become perfect. Neither let us fear that the world will be turned upside down, nor deem that all things are best as

they are. Let us have our harness on, ready when the trumpet sounds to do the best we can for the Right, the Good, and the True.

But, having thus decided for the legitimacy of Reform, I must not pause without asserting the ground on which my faith in its success is founded. The great element of reform is not born of human wisdom; it does not draw its life from human organizations. I find it only in CHRISTIANITY. "Thy Kingdom come!" There is a sublime and pregnant burden in this prayer. It is the aspiration of every soul that goes forth in the spirit of reform. For what is the significance of this prayer? It is a petition that all holy influences would penetrate and subdue and dwell in the heart of man, until he shall think, and speak, and do good from the very necessity of his being. So would the institutions of error and wrong crumble and pass away. So would sin die out from the earth. And the human soul, living in harmony with the Divine Will, this earth would become like heaven. This kingdom of God upon earth is no unsubstantiality—it covers no narrow field. It is the perfection and the meaning of that which we see, however dim and distant, in all true reforms. When it comes, the rage of war shall cease,—the inequalities of rank shall vanish, the chains of the slave will be broken, and the feet of

the oppressor will rest on the neck of his fellow no longer. And the din and the clamor that have rocked society for ages, and the woes that have heaved its heart so long, will be no more. These will all pass away, and be still—like the night and the storm, when the summer-morning descends upon the mountains, the valleys, and the sea.

It is too late for Reformers to sneer at Christianity; it is foolishness for them to reject it. In it are enshrined our faith in human progress—our confidence in reform. It is indissolubly connected with all that is hopeful, spiritual, capable in man. That men have misunderstood it and perverted it, is true. But it is also true that the noblest efforts for human melioration have come out of it—have been based upon it. Is it not so? Come, ye remembered ones, who sleep the sleep of the just, who took your conduct from the line of Christian Philosophy—come from your tombs, and answer! Come, Howard, from the gloom of the prison and the taint of the lazar-house, and show us what Philanthropy can do when imbued with the spirit of Jesus. Come, Eliott, from the thick forest where the red-man listens to the Word of Life—come, Penn, from thy sweet counsel and weaponless victory; and show us what Christian Zeal and Christian Love can accomplish with the

rudest barbarism and the fiercest hearts. Come, Raikes, from thy labors with the ignorant and the poor, and show us with what an eye this Faith regards the lowest and least of our race, and how diligently it labors, not for the body, not for the rank, but for the plastic soul that is to course the ages of immortality. And ye, who are a great number—ye nameless ones—who have done good in your narrower spheres, content to forego renown on earth; and, seeking your reward in the Record on High, come and tell us how kindly a spirit, how lofty a purpose, or how strong a courage, the religion ye professed can breathe into the poor, the humble, and the weak.

Go forth, then, Spirit of Christianity, to thy great work of REFORM! The Past bears witness to thee in the blood of thy martyrs, and the ashes of thy saints and heroes. The Present is hopeful because of thee. The Future shall acknowledge thy omnipotence!

VII.

THE TRUE GROUND OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

JAMES I. 27.

OUR time is distinguished for its moral and benevolent associations. Some of these are distinct and sectarian. To them I have now no reference. Others are catholic and philanthropic in their character. These assume a peculiar interest. In this interest consists not alone the fact that they are developments of the present age. Here we might ground some cheering hopes, and indulge in many pleasing speculations. It is a great truth that bursts upon us in this nineteenth century, that the condition of humanity, taken in the mass, is more hopeful than ever it was before. The wave of human experience, that has rolled through so many night-like ages, bearing upon its bosom blood and weapons and chains, is fast gliding now in blessed light that bursts through the rifts of the breaking clouds, and issues far up in the serene heaven.

But, I say, these associations assume an interest to us, not only from the indications which they present of human development and human progress, but because below them seems to lie this fact—that, *in these associations christians find a common ground, and a common ground of wide extent too, to meet upon.* Is it not an interesting question to ask—What will be the effect of the philanthropic movements of our day, in bringing together christian hearts, and in securing peace and union to the christian church?

Let us look a little at the interesting aspect which these associations present. The fundamental principle upon which they rest is PRACTICAL BENEVOLENCE. Now this is something plain and tangible. The Presbyterian takes his bible, and cannot find therein the doctrine of universal salvation—he thinks he discovers, instead, the doctrine of endless misery, and may verily believe he does God service, by proclaiming his brother a grievous heretic, and excluding him from the communion table. But he goes out on anniversary day, to the Prison Discipline Society, or the Temperance Association, and lo! there he meets the Universalist, and sits side by side with him, and unites with him in cordial, energetic action. The Unitarian cannot find the mystery of the Trinity in the record, nor can the Methodist, or the Bap-

tist, discover any thing less than the Supreme Godhead of Jesus; but the anniversary comes round, and lo! Unitarian and Methodist, and Baptist and Quaker, they are all *there*, speaking, voting, working, like men and like brothers. Now here is something not altogether meaningless and uninteresting. It is plain that each of these men being a bible reader and a bible disciple, each has found something there that brings him to the anniversary, and that bring them together. What is it? Why the injunction of PRACTICAL BENEVOLENCE—the great law of love to man breathing all through the gospel, seen in every lineament of Jesus, and discovered in that precept which says —"Visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction."

Here, then, I say, is a common ground of christian union, and a ground of no mean extent. The field is as broad as the world—the ties of unity are as strong as the affections of the human heart. We cannot all believe the same thing—we cannot all worship in the same form; but we know what charity is, and what human brotherhood is, and what, in its essence, christianity is—and it is a great thing to hold so much in common.

Now a union of christians on a common ground of faith never has taken place, and probably never will take place. It has been tried. It has made

many hypocrites, and many formalists, and induced much ignorance and superstition. The Romish hierarchy tried this—the union of the church on the ground of a common faith. The Reformation exploded that idea. It will never be attempted again. Of course, I do not mean here that there is no one article of belief, or that there are not articles in which all will agree. From the necessity of things *christians* must believe in God and in Christ. But when I allude to the ground of faith, I refer to the sectarian points. I do not think that men will ever come together upon one creed-platform, if that platform contains exclusively the views of any one sect, or the peculiar views of all the sects. I do not think that all men will ever be, speculatively, Presbyterians, or Methodists, or Baptists, or Unitarians, or Universalists. In *heart*, in *action*, they may be all that is good in all these systems. But they will never, probably, unite on one ground of *faith*. We shall never have a Catholic church so far as belief is concerned—a church whose creed shall be alike for the young and for the old, for the untutored and for the enlightened mind, for the mind of the nineteenth and the mind of the twenty-ninth century. Is it not time that we had given up this idea?

But, you may say—"if this is so, why preach

at all your peculiar views?" For this reason, to be sure—that *we* believe those views to be true, and hope to make them widely prevalent. But this is a different thing from excluding all from the christian name who will not adopt our views —this is a different thing from making our views essential, absolutely essential to the christian character. Now this has been the fault of the sects. They have made their peculiar views of christian doctrine essential to christian character—have denied men the christian name and christian communion, and called them *heretics* and *infidels*, because they did not adopt their views. And, I ask, is it not time that we gave up this practice of un-christianizing all men who cannot adopt our peculiar articles of faith? Is it not time that we looked for some broader, deeper principle of union than any one set of tenets? The chain is too scanty, the links are too few—it cannot embrace all the tongues and tribes and kindred of true christendom. The bond must spring from the heart, not from the brain—must be a bond of practice, not of sectarian faith—must live in the affections, not the reason.

I am not too sanguine. I know how bitter the opposition to all this is. I know what a firm seat bigotry and ignorance yet have in the human soul. It is enough to make one cry out, not with

indignation, but with pain, at the miserable narrowness of some of our *christians*. It was some time since, that I looked over a religious paper, in which was given an account of revivals, and once or twice it was mentioned that such a man was "a profane man, a Universalist" — "a drunken man, a Universalist;" or something equivalent. Thus Universalism was classed with profaneness and drunkenness, as if these are its necessary adjuncts. Now this is very narrow. We will call it ignorance, but surely we ought not to boast much of our "age of light," if such ignorance is widely extended. It ought to be known, if it is not known, that there is no necessary connection between Universalism and drunkenness and profaneness. Why, a man *may* believe God is his father and benefactor—that he is bound to love him by the dearest and holiest ties; I say, it is *possible* that a man should believe thus, and yet not profane God's name—why should he? A man *may* believe that intemperance mars and crushes the physical, intellectual, and moral man, bringing ruin, sorrow and death, and yet, although believing in the final salvation of all men, not be a drunkard—why should he? What necessary connection is there between the belief in the final salvation of all men and drunkenness? Oh! it is petty, I had almost said it is *vile*—this low, narrow

estimate of religious opinions, and religious men. What if I should indite an article, and say—such a man is a deacon in the church, a sharper, and a Baptist—such a man is a selfish, hard-dealing man and a Presbyterian—such a man is a licentious man and a Methodist; classing these terms together as matters of course? The whole community would feel outraged, and cry against it. But would it be any worse in this case, than it is in the other? Have there been profane and drunken Universalists? Very likely. So also have there been cheating Baptists, and selfish Presbyterians, and licentious Methodists. But what of that? Am I prepared to say that they were sharpers, or misers, or rakes, just because they were Baptists, or Presbyterians, or Methodists? No!—far be it from me to detract from the good character that many, who live in consistency with their views, bear.

Now I know that there is a great deal of just such narrowness as this which I have illustrated, existing in the Christian Church. I know that in some sections an almost impenetrable veil, thicker than the wall between Jew and Gentile, hangs dark and unpromising among the sects. But, although things work gradually, there is always reason to hope and to be strong when *a good principle* once gets foot-hold in the world. A true

principle never dies. A grain of seed, sown in truth and holiness, *will* spring up to fruition—though it may be long, long ere it shall flower in its beauty, or spread its green leaves to the sun. Therefore I have hope for Christian union from the benevolent movements of the day. They bring men of very discordant theologies together, in very harmonious and very extensive action. And though they may not, by any means, develop *all* of Religion, they reveal, in glimpses, much of what true Religion, true Christianity, is. And so we find that in true practical religion we can unite, though not in speculative tenets. And this will help men to know each other better—to see more and more of one another—to find how much of good, deep, *heart*-religion there is in all, and to find that it will make sweet music enough in heaven, up among the harps and the angels, though the tide of song to God and the Lamb comes mingling from the lips of Presbyterian and Methodist and Baptist and Universalist. And so, by-and-by, there will be less misrepresentation, less abuse, more respectful treatment towards one another; and, gradually, men will find that in *practical* religion—in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and in keeping themselves unspotted from the world—there is a bond of union deep as the sou wide as the race, beau-

tiful like Heaven, holy like Christ. And one will say to another — "My brother, I have sinned against thee. I thought in the little parchment creed that my fathers gave me was the test of true religion — and I called thee hard names. But now, I have learned my error. I see that christianity is not a *dogma* but a *life*. Come, and here, where our Master's broken body and his shed blood are manifested by not inappropriate emblems of his rent and divided church, here we will commune together, as we hope to when we see him glorified, and behold in each other the same lovely image."

My friends, I said I am not sanguine, and therefore I only *speculate* upon what will be a very natural effect of the associated benevolent action of the day. In these organizations, as I have already remarked, we get glimpses of much of what christianity really *is*. Now men, in all ages of the church, have been prone to seal up the religion of the gospel in articles and forms. The controversy has all been about these. One of the first discussions in the christian church was about circumcision, about Jewish forms. But Christ did not come to announce to men that they must be circumcised, or abstain from such and such meats. He came to shed abroad in men's hearts the Kingdom of Heaven, which "is not meat or drink, but

righteousness, and joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost." Men have sought to make Christianity depend upon the belief that a wafer was actually Christ's body—that the Pope was infallible. Men have sought to make christianity hinge upon the point that Christ is very God and very man—that endless misery is the revealed will of God respecting a portion of the human race—that baptism is essential to salvation. And so they have sat down at separate tables, and have cast angry glances at each other, and thundered long and loud from the pulpits, and met each other coldly in the strects, and filled newspapers and pamphlets, yea, books and libraries, with controversial abuse. But is all this christianity? No more than the raiment is the body, or the meat the life. Christianity is a *Life*, and every devout and loving heart has felt it, no matter what its name, or sect. Men have not evinced their christianity when sitting in a certain church, or worshipping in a certain form, or holding to articles of faith with the *head* merely. The old heathens could do all this; and what better, therefore, are we than they? What *peculiarity* was there in christianity; if this was all that it came to teach? But when men have gone out and visited the fatherless, when they have resisted the temptations and overcome the sins of the world,

then have they manifested christianity — then have they shown what it *is*.

This being so, it will be seen at a glance, that all sects have, in fact, acknowledged *fundamental* christianity. There has never been a sect that has denied the necessity and the beauty of a life of holiness and goodness. There has never been a sect that has not seen that Christ is the teacher of holiness and goodness. If, then, all sects practice that holiness and goodness, will they not meet on one common ground? And, I ask, are not the movements of the present day fast tending to develop this fact that all sects believe in what is truly vital and practical in christianity? I think so. Here for the poor inebriate —here for the bond-slave—here for the cruelly-treated criminal—here for the suffering poor; we can act, and hope, and pray together. And do not think that there is no *religion* in this. It has been the fallacy of men, that they have too lightly prized this every-day, practical goodness. But such was the way that Jesus lived—in every-day, practical goodness. Men have been prone to limit religion to the church, to the closet, to reading, meditation, and retirement—and to think too little of taking hold of the evils of humanity, of visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction—of cherishing a

loving heart and manifesting a loving life. But the age is correcting this error. The dark clouds of strife and smoke are breaking away. Far through the opening vista of rent devices and broken symbols, like the heaving billows of a mighty sea, the tide of Christian Philanthropy is rolling on. Men of all sects are there. The Catholic is there with his crucifix pressed to his bosom. The Methodist comes on, singing the sweet hymns of Wesley. The Baptist brings his robe of immersion. The Presbyterian stands upright, as his iron fathers did of old, to pray in simple reverence and freedom. The Universalist chants his anthem of restoration and holiness. But they stand shoulder to shoulder. They all point upward, earnestly upward, to that great banner which waves over all—whose device is the Crucified Jesus—whose inscription all over in letters of blessed light is his last command—"*Love one another;*" is the spirit of his pure and undefiled religion—"*Visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, keep yourselves unspotted from the world.*"

Thus, I say, my friends, in the benevolent associations of the day, we discover a glowing hopefulness, and the kindlings of a grand and cheering truth. We may see, that not only do they promise well for man—for the lowly, and

desolate, and down-trodden; but they reveal *the true ground of Christian Union*, which is not a unity of faith, but a unity of *heart* and *life*—a practical unity. And, viewed in this light, are not the benevolent movements of the age indeed encouraging? Do they not call for the blessings and prayers of all good men?

With two or three remarks, I will close this subject. And,

First;—I have not been recommending a mere outward, dry-husk morality. "Pure *religion*," the text says—"Pure *religion*, and undefiled before God and the Father is this—To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." I know there is a *form* of morality, an outward, decent aspect of living, while to all devout feeling, and to all true, inward life, the heart is a stranger. But I understand this to describe an ardent love to man—a zealous philanthropic action for human relief and human improvement. And not only so. I understand it to demand a freedom from sinful desires and sinful conduct—a keeping unspotted from the evil of the world. The whole requirement in the text, then, is nothing less than loving man with a heart sanctified by love to God—a soul growing and developing in righteousness. So it is no dead, worldly matter. It

is spirit, and it is life. I know there is no gloomy mystery about it. It is a calm, consistent, benevolent living. It will make a man feel that to be religious, he must carry his religion out—must apply it. These, it would seem, are too often sowing their religion only for another world, feeling that in *this* they have nothing particular to do. It is a mistake. We have souls here as much as we shall have hereafter. This is one sphere of the soul's action, the vestibule, it is true, of grander and higher realities, but still, I say, one sphere of the soul's action —this every-day world. Go out, then—visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction—do *good*, absolute, practical good, simple and ordinary as the work may seem; and keep yourselves unspotted from the world. This is *Practical Christianity*—the christianity which all sects have acknowledged, and the ground whereon they will finally meet, if they meet at all—nay, the ground, whereon, even now, in some degree, they are coming together.

Again;—I have not spoken thus because I value lightly doctrinal views, or would sacrifice, or compromise mine. No, I value them too highly. They make this great and shifting order of things too harmonious and cheerful, for me to give them up, and they seem too intimately connected with

the welfare of man for me to keep them back. And, at the risk of being called *dogmatic*, I must say that I think these are the views that will tend to bring about the wished-for state of things, that are calculated to make men value practical christianity, and feel the importance of true morality, and the significance of human brotherhood. These principles may not be acknowledged, they may not be understood, but, I think, like leaven they are to some extent working in the hearts of all christians. And under their influence christian sects may finally come together, not in speculative faiths, not by the sacrifice of opinion, but in *heart*, in *love*, in *action*—as all the disciples of Christ should. Peter may think circumcision necessary, and Paul count it of little worth; and yet both may be good disciples of Jesus, and entitled to seats at the table of the common Master. Can we believe that the Church is always to be rent asunder, and agitated by internal conflicts? After it has passed through this phase for a time, may it not come out, beautiful in the robe of Practical Religion, with the symbol of primeval brotherhood upon its bosom, with love in its eye, and peace on its brow? Oh! here, after all, may be the ground whereon God has ordained that christian union shall take place—the ground of practical benevolence, good-will to men. We can all

unite here. Let us hope and pray for this union. We may not see it. We may be called heretics all our days, and bear the brand of odium, and be denied the christian name. But hope still for that consummation. Hope still that the time shall come, when Christianity shall take the place of Sectarianism, and the Gospel as it was ushered in by angels, shall be responded to, by the hearts of its children—"Glory to God in the Highest: on earth, peace, good-will towards men!"

And, finally, let us consider, my friends, the force which the text has upon us. It tells us *what* religion is. It is not a curious treatise, this text —a fragment of abstract philosophy, it is of personal and vital interest. It tells us to be pure and undefiled; it tells *you* and *me* to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction; it tells *you* and *me* to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Let us heed it. Let us act upon it; and so come into the company of all the sainted and the just, who, with conflicting views of doctrine, have had but one great element of practice—indwelling religion.

VIII.

INTOLERANCE.

— Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.—Luke, ix. 55.

Among the many topics appropriate to our times, I select for the present occasion the subject of Intolerance. It appears to me that this sentiment is somewhat rife among us, and it seems to be the sentiment rebuked in the text—"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." You recollect the circumstances. Jesus was journeying towards Jerusalem. In the course of his travel he came to a village of the Samaritans. They did not receive him. They were hostile towards the Jews, and the spirit of Intolerance exhibited itself. For, why would they not receive Christ? For no other reason than simply because his face was set to go to Jerusalem, the city of those with whom they were at strife. Here, I say, was the spirit of Intolerance. But it did not end here. The disciples, James and John, caught the flame, and they broke out—"Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume

them, as Elias did?" But they addressed a Being now in whom such an earthly and unholy passion could not dwell. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," said he;—"For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And calmly he went on to another village.

But this rebuke was not alone for that group on the road to Jerusalem. Wherever man is bitter and revengeful against his erring or dissenting brother, no matter how eminent his standing, how ardent his professions, how commendable his zeal, this suggestion comes to him with all its force,—"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." It is, doubtless, a rebuke that needs to be heeded in this age. We do not hang Quakers, we do not exile Baptists, we rear no inquisition, we sharpen no martyr-stakes—but these are only *forms*. The *spirit* of intolerance may live, though the power of advancing Freedom and Christianity may deprive it of its faggot and its axe. The wrong *sentiment*, the deep, bad *motive*,—these are what christianity aims at. Away down into the caverns of the human heart, it looks with its piercing eye, and if a chafed and hostile feeling is *there*, it is enough for its rebuke and its discipline. The red lightning did not come down from heaven, according to the impulses of the disciples, and therefore no outward evil was accomplished. But the bad

spirit was alive—the bitter, revengeful motive; and Christ saw it and reproved it. Now, then, because I see different sects allowed the rights of conscience, because churches of every name point their glittering spires to heaven, because opinions are freely broached, and topics openly discussed, and loud professions of philanthropy and busy movings of zeal are all around me, I am not therefore convinced that there is no intolerance. I say, the *form* of intolerance may be different—it may not be the Papal Interdict, the thumb-screw, or the rack, but it may lie in Jesuitical arts, in whispered calumnies, in slanderous words, in angry, violent philippics. In short, as it has come to be the peculiarity of the age not to war with weapons of steel, nor to attack with physical force, so much as to speak through arguments, pamphlets, books, and moral influences; so as the sword and the torch were used by intolerance in that past age, when the sword and the torch were fashionable—this age may see intolerance clothed in the meek garments of modern christian professors, peeping out from "highly respectable and virtuous" circles, and speaking in the anger of the impatient conservative, or the zeal of the enthusiastic reformer. Let me, then, speak of intolerance as something still existing, and therefore as something of which it is still appropriate to speak.

I. Of Religious Intolerance. If this spirit of intolerance is unamiable any where, especially is it when found in connection with the name of Christ. And yet I know of no sphere where it seems rooted so deep, or where it kindles so high, as upon the subject of religion. This excommunication for a difference of opinion, this perfect hatred that *seems*, at least, to exist not only towards *opinions*, but *men*, this dividing of the Church of Jesus into hostile sects—is it like a manifestation of that Teacher, who came to gather men to a knowledge of one Father—to the fold of one Shepherd? And yet, where will you find more bitter warfare than that which is waged for religious doctrines? Where see more ridicule and aspersion than in the columns of the religious newspaper? Where find more coldness or alienation than among christians of different views? Now there must be some cause for this intolerance. And it appears to me that it may arise in part, at least, from a misconception, and this misconception seems founded on the idea that a particular *belief* is essential to christian *character*. Now I wish to be understood upon this point. All must agree that faith in Christ is absolutely necessary to entitle a man to the name of Christian. But within this avowal of christian faith how wide may be the diversity of knowledge, of

reasoning power, of disposition! These may all lead to different views of the Saviour's doctrines, and to different perceptions as to what are and what are not his teachings. And yet I affirm that no one can truly see Christ, and drink in the influence of his character, and not be a christian at heart. And there is no one sect in the ample field of christendom, that has not christian truth enough to kindle christian life in its members. Let me say again by way of explanation, that I do not wish men to be indifferent to doctrines, or to sectarian views. In the glow of generous and truly christian feeling, men will often say—"Well, it makes no difference about doctrines, provided the heart is right." It does make a difference—and the difference is just as wide as the gap between truth and error. It makes this difference—that the soul that imbibes an erroneous instead of a true doctrine, is less happy, and less advanced in its true life, than it might be. Still, there is truth at the bottom of the expression—"It makes no difference what a man believes;" and it lies at the point at which I am now arriving. The meaning of it is this—that the truth is worth but little unless it produces its fruits, and, if it produce its fruits, this is the chief end; and there is a conviction in saying this, that in all sects there is truth enough to

produce good fruits. And I say so too. In every christian denomination, there is enough of vital, kindling christianity to make good hearts. No one can sit at the foot of the cross, as a devoted, earnest disciple, and not feel the light that rays out from it moving upon his soul. No one can take the simple christian law of love to God, and love to man, and go by its guidance, and yet be an immoral man. No one can stand by that cleft rock, and that irradiated tomb, and not believe that religion appeals to something deeper than time and sense, to which we must awake, and for which we must strive. These are indisputable facts, first principles, that are tacitly admitted by all who assume the christian name. But, I say, this matter is not virtually thus regarded by many sects. A man's variation in christian belief, is looked upon as a token of depreciated moral and religious character. The unworthiness of such a disciple to approach the communion table is asserted upon no other ground, and his probable moral conduct is traced to and linked with his faith—and his faith, often, not as it really is, but as men see it with their eyes, colored as they may be by ignorance and prejudice. This, then, I repeat, would seem to be one cause of the spirit of intolerance that prevails among various christian denominations.

Again;—we may trace this intolerant spirit back to the idea, that a man is actually to blame for being in error—that if he is in error he knows it all the while, and only persists in it from a perverse and wicked disposition. Hence, men are denounced for teaching such and such doctrines, are scolded at and sneered at—but not reasoned with, or pitied. If the gross assumption that I am right and you are wrong be admitted, without entering into the merits of the case, still, I know not why I should *abuse*, or *denounce* you. Surely, you may think you are right, and if it be a delusion to think so, still, it demands a labor of love, an effort of reason—not a display of intolerance. But how men will knit their brows, and vent their bitterness at the name of a *heretic!* A heretic! Why, one would think, from the common sentiment, that a heretic was one who had not only unchristianized but *unmanned* himself—one going forth on purpose to destroy and pollute, laying sacrilegious hands on the holiest things from a spirit of sheer malignity and wickedness, and opposing himself to the received faith from a scornful and sinful spirit. But now it is *possible* that a heretic may be a very different person from all this. He may be a meek seeker for truth, blinded, perhaps, but sincere; he may be a man who has studied and

thought, and who in conscience can not adopt the received ideas; he may be a man who nourishes all the religious affections, who drinks religion with a keener thirst, and from purer springs—or thinks he does—because he has thrown by what seemed to him impediments in the way to the fountain-head—impediments to him, although to you they may be sacred articles of faith. A heretic may be such a man as this, and surely he is not to be denounced and abused for all these peculiarities. And look ye, who, burning with intolerance, would almost call down fire from heaven upon him, he may be, after all, farther advanced in Divine truth and Divine life than *you*, with all your faith, ancient and wide-spread as it is. Such a thing, I say, is *possible*.

But while intolerance like this would seem to fasten more particularly upon the orthodox than upon the heretic sects—upon the Conservative rather than the Reforming Religionist, it may be found with the latter, as well as with the former—and I think it will be found there in our day. The Samaritans in refusing to receive Jesus, exhibited intolerance, but the disciples, in their turn, manifested the very sentiment that excited them. How common this is! The spirit we denounce, we oppose in the very same spirit. The boasting Liberal approaches the village of the

Orthodox Samaritan, but he will have none of him, because his face is set in a suspicious direction. "What an intolerant bigot," exclaims the liberal, "Oh! that I could call down fire from heaven." Nay, but tell me, my friend, is there not more than *one* of you who is intolerant now? I deprecate persecution for heresy, then—but I equally deprecate the spirit in which the heretic deals out his accusations of "superstitious," "bigoted," "timid," and "time-serving." I want no man abused because he rejects the miracles, but I do not want him to abuse me because I hold to them. I affirm that it is unjust for the orthodox professor to un-christianize the Universalist, but I maintain that it is just as wrong for the Universalist to call the orthodox a hypocrite, or a dupe. And, I say, such a spirit as is manifested in the last-named illustration, is too rife in our day.

Such, then, is Religious Intolerance. I would that it was done away with. This is the union of christians that I ask for. Not an identity of doctrine, not an indifference to articles of belief, not a worshipping in one place or one form—but a recognition of the great common humanity, of the right of opinion, of the oneness of the Christ-like Image seen through many human forms. Alas! we shall never have this sentiment,

as the tide of thought and feeling runs at present. We shall never have this sentiment, until we rise to more intimate communion with that One who could bless even while men cursed, could heal while they smote, could pray for them when they pierced; and even when turned from their homes and denied their hospitality, could say to those who breathed the bitterness of vengeance in his behalf—"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of—the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

II. Again;—I would allude to the spirit of Intolerance, as connected with our Philanthropic and Moral Reforms. Men may proclaim their love for their fellows, may be zealous in forming associations, may boast how consistently they stand upon the great christian platform; but I would say to them—it is not only the work thou doest, but the *spirit* in which thou workest, that will determine upon what platform you stand. The Christian Idea has been in the world a long time, but alas! too little has the Christian Idea been suffered to accomplish. "A grain of wheat," said the Saviour, "must first fall into the ground and die,"—beautifully alluding to himself, but also giving an emblem of the fate of his doctrine. That too has been buried—buried not so much beneath *persecutions*, as beneath *corruptions*.

Free and glorious from the martyr's ashes and the martyr's blood, sprung the green harvest of the church; but when, instead of the Martyr we had the Priest, instead of the sandalled Apostle the mitred Hierarch, then the Church became worldly, and the germ of truth had to lie beneath the feet of the luxurious and the bigoted, until its fruit sprung forth again in some lowly and despised Reformer, that must also die ere he could give it life and diffusion. This has been the fate of the Christian Idea. It has not been carried out in the Christian *spirit*, and it could not develop without that. Men have met Pagan Relics with Christian Relics, heretic armies with Christian armies, ejection from Samaritan villages with Christian invocations of fire from heaven. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" —may not this be said to some even at this day, whose idea may be true, whose premises may be right, but whose *instruments* are carnal and deadly?

Take the Temperance Reform. Is an intolerant spirit right in this cause? You say yon man is a debased and polluted drunkard—you deem that rigid measures are the best for him. Nay, but, my friend, what induced you in the first place to plead for temperance? A love of your race, you say,—your heart bled to see the miseries wrought

by intoxication. But is this the end of your tenderness? Have you no mantle of charity to cast over those tottering, blighted limbs? Have you nothing of the spirit of Him who could seek the healing of the moral leper covered all over with sin? Have you nothing of the love that can find something of the *common man* in that ruined clay, some fire that was kindled at a mother's breast in that hard heart, some chord almost but not quite dead? Ay, you can find this in the *drunkard*, but you can have no patience with him who deals out the liquid fire, and puts it to his parched lips. Nay, even here, I plead for tolerance—tolerance with the man, I speak not of his *business*. Let public opinion and restrictive law take care of *that*. But he, too, is a *man*, and, believe me, reason, the power of conscience, the law of love and right, may touch even *him*. Perhaps he sees not even *yet* the force of thy argument Perhaps the words that shall pierce his heart are already winging their way. But at all events, be not intolerant. Trust reason, love, christianity —these are the mighty agents of reform.

I pass into the Anti-Slavery meeting. Here, I discover, is agitated a great truth—the natural equality of all men—the right of the poorest and lowest to be free, to breathe God's air upon what

hill-top he will, to follow His sunshine around the earth if he list—the wrong of holding him in bondage, of putting him by force to do another's work. But the idea and the spirit, at times, seem widely separated. The quondam philanthropist now seems to struggle for words to express his sense, not merely of the *traffic*, but of the men who acknowledge it. They are hounds and murderers, he says—hard-hearted and brutally wicked. I would say to him—Friend, this is not the legitimate spirit of thy reform. Have some pity even for the slave-holder. Do not ever paint him as such a grim, ferocious monster. He, too, is a *man*. He may not have reasoned as far as thou. Many things may stand between him and the light. Be not so violent and sweeping in thy charges. His position may be the result of wrong reasoning, not of moral obliquity. I have sat at the table of the slave-holder. I found him open and generous. I have slept beneath his roof, with no fears of murder by him. I have been in the bosom of his family—I found there tender and beautiful affections, the sunshine of love, and the sentiments of chastity and reverence. I have opened the records of our country's fame, and his name was upon them. There are places of red battle for human rights,—his blood stained them. Thou mistakest thy work when thou callest him dog, murderer,

monster. Conscience compels thee to speak the truth, thou sayest—ay, but conscience does not compel thee to speak vindictively, and without discrimination. Thy true work is to love, to reason, to strive with moral suasion—not to spit out words of philanthropy in drops of fire—not to cry, "Human Brotherhood! and cursed be all who do not say so with me."

Thus, then, in our philanthropic reforms, let there be no intolerance. To those who cherish it, Christianity says—"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."

There is, however, another class who cannot brook the mention of reform, or reformers. To them such things are disagreeable. They feel pretty much as the sluggard does, when one somewhat rudely, with determined hands, says to him —"sleep no more, it is time to rise." They think that the world is well enough as it is, and that no good can come of striving to alter present circumstances. This they say, because *they* are quite comfortable, and that, to *them*, is enough. But they must remember that there are many others in the world—they have innumerable brethren. These cry out against cold and hunger and moral deprivation, and there must be reform. Those to whom reform is an alarming cry, are ready to exclaim against every reformer, as a low annihi-

lator, a house-breaker, or a highway-robber—somebody who is bent upon disturbing order and introducing anarchy, upon uprooting society and giving reins to licentiousness—in short, as a very suspicious and fearful character. This, too, is intolerance. Listen to all the reformer has to say. Seek not to prevent discussion, or to shut out petition. Accept what is reasonable, reject what is false, and fear not that truth shall ever be destroyed. But, to denounce without hearing, to abuse because he touches some selfish chord, to call him fanatic and licentious, this is intolerance—if ye do so "Ye know not what spirit ye are of."

III. I would allude to one more manifestation of the spirit of intolerance. I mean the manner in which we too often treat criminals and wrong-doers. The *crime*, I maintain, is to be abhorred and destroyed. But not so the *criminal*. He is a man—he has a soul—the sympathies of our nature are not dead in him. I know, sometimes, it would almost seem so. It would seem as if every spark of generous or virtuous fire that once may have burned in that heart, must long since have smouldered into obscene ashes. That gore-stained hand, that scarred brow, that lip all convulsed with derisive laughter, or twitching with hate and fiery scorn—"Oh! here is one to be

crushed," you say, "loathed, blotted from existence, with all the terrors of the law, strong and bloody, heaped upon him." Not so—I affirm again, not so. Take that criminal, shut him up that he harm not his fellows, and then labor with him for a nobler end than destruction—*reformation*. It is man-like to crush and destroy—it is Christ-like to purify and build up. There is some hope for the most depraved. And if we were not so intolerant, thought more of the criminal as a *man*, thought more of reformation than revenge, we should smite upon that iron-heart with words of love, patiently, unweariedly, until we should find some pulse of good throbbing yet, perhaps, with the mystic beatings which it learned in some departed mother's arms. Holy memories of childhood shall rush upon that long-shrouded soul—voices of early innocence shall ring like Sabbath church-bells long forgotten, calling him back to innocence and to peace. Such things have been. Can they not be again? At all events, I say, be not so intolerant towards the criminal. Separate him more, in your mind, from his crime. Think of the associations which may have surrounded him from his younger days. Think of the want in which he was born, the vice into which he was baptized. Oh! it is the true Christian work to *reform*. Christ died for all—for the very mur-

derer at his cross. Who says any man is hopeless, utterly degraded, fit only to be destroyed? He falters from the confidence of Christ. His revenge gets the better of his reason. He knows not what spirit he is of.

Let us not be intolerant, then, even to the criminal. Let us secure ourselves and him from any more harm. Let us inflict a righteous retribution. But let us look upon the matter from a *Christian* point of view.

But, thus far, we have spoken of *criminals*—men amenable to the severest retributions of the law—men whose deeds are of the blackest dye. I pass from these to speak of the conduct of society too often exhibited towards those who step aside from the path of virtue, under various circumstances. Let the offender be one who has been lured to ruin by villainous art and sinful fascination. How soon

> "The sharp scorn of men
> On her once bright and stately head is cast!"

How quick the expanded brow gathers into a frown! How soon the gentle mood of friendship is changed to unmingled loathing and contempt! Is *all* this right? Shall we never listen to the pleadings of charity? Who can read that heart? Who can trace its weary, fearful struggles? Who knows the depth of the sharp agony that is prey-

ing upon it now? Rejected, scorned, driven from the light of home—paternal lips open to discard—maternal hands raised to curse—hope withered in its spring-time—affection repelled and driven freezing to its fountain—the sanctity of woman's sisterhood averted—the sneer of men quivering like sharp lightning on his face. Oh! is there no room for *mercy* here—no hand of pity stretched out to restore—no Christian love that will yet seek to save?

Again: some hitherto respected member of society commits a wrong. How prone are we to jump at conclusions! How eager to denounce! There may be some palliation. At least, there is but the frailty of our common manhood. You and I had originally no patent of virtue in distinction from the man who to-day has fallen. Go back to his earliest temptation. See the first moment when it fastens upon him. See the first moment when that seemingly impregnable honor yields to the subtle assault or the vigorous attack. Mark that rich treasure, *self-respect*, as it dies out from the soul, long before the keen eyes of the uncharitable world detect a flaw. See the resolution and the struggle, the momentary victory and the relapse—the victim of sin, now nerved by old feelings of virtue, struggling "like a strong swimmer with his agony" and his shame—now

listless and hopeless, like one who has gone too far to repent. And when the *overt* act is committed, and the staring world sees all, it overlooks the struggle, overlooks the temptation, its forgets the common frailty—it sees only the *vice;* and, with an indignant feeling, as though its immaculate virtue were insulted, it cries out, "*Hunt him and hang him!*" I say this is intolerance. I mean this disposition to show judgment without mercy, this relish for detecting faults, this lack of pity, this blind fury of revenge that as often does wrong as does the weak mercy that forgoes all. When we thus feel, truly is it, that we know not what spirit we are of.

I shall say nothing further at present upon this subject of intolerance. I have spoken only for christian love, only for justice. I have not been pleading for error, for wrong-doing, for crime—but only that we should regard *the common manhood* that lies behind all error, and wrong-doing, and crime. Upon this manhood let us ever look, as upon something which contains a common element with ourselves, something to love, to labor, and to pray for. How shall we do this? My friends, we must sit at the feet of Christ, and drink in his great law of love. We cannot draw this love from organizations, we cannot create it by associations—we must derive it from Christ,

and then carry it into our associations. Men do not go to Christ for it, they go into associations without it, and hence the intolerance that abounds in the most professedly philanthropic movements.

Christianity is against intolerance. She goes forth to conquest, yea to certain conquest, though the consummation may seem long delayed. But in going forth she rejects the torch and the axe, relying upon the omnipotence of truth and love. She has a battle to fight, a revolution to accomplish—but in fighting that battle she uses no carnal weapons, she invokes not the aid of war, cruel and vengeful war, that tramples its purple wine-press whose red clusters are human hearts. She trusts the intrinsic goodness of her cause, and the all-subduing power of her influence. And when that revolution is accomplished, the first will be last and the last first. She will pass by the sepulchres of conquerors and kings, to rebuild and re-garnish the tombs of the prophets—she will pass by the bigot in mitre and in lawn, and elevate the poor widow who has labored contentedly in her sphere, cherishing the flowers of holiness in her bosom. And she will abolish this war of creeds, and she will still this angry controversy. And she will gather the children of men into one great temple, whose worship shall be holiness, whose creed shall be love, whose dome shall open

up into the illimitable universe of God. But ere this great work shall be accomplished, as one of the first conditions of its accomplishment, intoler ance, deep-rooted, bitter intolerance must be eradicated from the hearts of men. Hearer, it must be eradicated from your heart and mine ere we are christians indeed, ere we are fitted for the elements and the associations of heaven.

IX.

THE WORK OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE HUMAN SOUL.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

MATTHEW v. 17.

THUS sublimely did Jesus proclaim his own mission. "*I am not come to destroy, but to* FULFIL." I do not pretend that in interpreting these words as I do, I present their whole application, but their scope includes the special point upon which I propose to dwell, and it is this. Christ came to raise men above the necessity of outward laws and arbitrary institutions, and make them a law to themselves, living from a spiritual perception and a divine life in their own souls, and so in accordance with the law of God, which law is, in other words, the only mode of the soul's perfection—its holiness and welfare. This is not proclaiming that all outward laws are wrong, that all arbitrary institutions are falsehoods. They have had a good mission to perform. They have been restrictive and suggestive. The law that tells me I shall not steal, and if I do steal, my

right hand shall be cut off, may be a good law in its season. There is a time when man's intellect is limited, when his moral sentiments are undeveloped, and in order to prevent him from doing wrong, the first lesson that he can learn is, that he will receive injury if he does steal. Now to pause with this, and to look upon it from the christian point of view, makes the law often very meagre and very ignoble. All that it has done thus far is to excite a selfish fear. The man will not steal, because, if he does steal, he will receive hurt. Why it is wrong to steal, he does not know, and the *disposition* to steal is in his heart. But there stands the law and the penalty. "Thou shalt not steal"—"if thou dost steal thou losest thy right hand." And he pauses and desists from his purpose. But now he may be led to take another step, and ask—"Why should I not steal? Why do this law and this penalty exist? I know they do exist, but the mere fact of their existence is not satisfactory. I see things existing in the material world, but there is a *reason* for their existence." This will naturally lead him to inquire into the nature and the reason of right and wrong, and then he may desist from stealing, from other motives than the mere fear of losing his right hand. So you see this law, and laws of a like character, may be good in their places—they restrain men

from doing wrong—they are suggestive of moral distinctions. So with many institutions. Take, for instance, the Mosaic Ritual. Its ceremonies were suggestive, were premonitory. They led the dark idolater, and the passion-blinded Jew, up to a perception of the oneness of the Deity, and by material symbols prepared them for spiritual realities. To have introduced them, at once, into the broad dispensation of christianity, would have been a violent transition, unlike any other process of the Creator, who in His universe brings forth first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. Shall we say, then, that the *connecting links*, the preparatory steps, were unnecessary and false? Every law that restrains men from wrong, or suggests the right; every institution that opens up a clearer perception of the reality of things, is good in its place. Christ's dispensation does not contradict them, does not repudiate them, but it *supersedes* them—rather, it absorbs them—as the ocean absorbs the countless water-drops, the rivulets and streams that have flowed through many sections—absorbs them all in its boundless bosom, and, accomplishing what these lesser streams in their several localities could not do, rocks navies, transports rich merchandise, and heaves its blessings upon a thousand shores. These laws and these institutions are false, and

false only, when men undertake to *perpetuate* them—to bind them around the soul when it has out-grown them—to invest them with an abiding sanctity when the occasion for them has passed away. Each atom of good in them shall live for ever, but it has passed into a higher organization. Seek not now the law of the acorn, it has become absorbed in the law of the oak—anon, the law of the oak has become the law of wind and vapor, of soil and sunshine, and these are embraced in some more comprehensive principle. So goes on the process in the natural world. We progress from lesser laws that are good in their departments up to some greater law that *comprehends* these. Light is one law and heat is another. The philosopher looks to see if both are not effects of a single cause—electricity, perhaps, and electricity may be the effect of magnetism, or *vice-versa;* and, by-and-by, men may come to see that all the multiform changes of nature hang upon one single cause—which cause is itself, what? The first manifestation of that intelligence who speaks and it is done, who commands and it stands fast. But if men ever arrive at such an elevation as to discover the great agent that is the controlling law of the material universe, shall they say that it *destroys* these lesser laws of magnetism, electricity, light, heat? Will it make them false? No—it

will *confirm* them—it will show their highest relations—it will not destroy, it will *fulfil* them. Do you not now understand how it was, that although Christ came to break symbols and to abolish rites, and to introduce a new dispensation, he came not to destroy, but to fulfil?

And do you not now see also the point upon which I am laboring—the work of christianity in the human soul?—That it aims to raise man above his dependence upon human laws and outward institutions, to intimate relationship with God, and to direct action from His own Spirit, if I may say so, indwelling in the soul? Human Laws and outward Institutions, I have said, are *restrictive* and *suggestive*—but they are not *creative*. They may prevent from doing wrong, they may suggest the right—but they cannot create the *good disposition* from which all consistent virtue emanates, and without which we shall ever be inclined to do wrong, and have but fitful glimpses of the right. The existence of laws is an evidence of human imperfection. If every man was "a law to himself," after the fashion of christianity, there would be no need for legislators and enactments. If men had no disposition to murder, there would be no need for a law concerning murder. Laws are made as crimes and wrongs appear. The promulgation

of a new edict is the token of a new manifestation of evil. The nation that has occasion for the least laws is the most advanced in true civilization. A land that should require no prisons and no magistrates, would be the happiest land on the face of the earth, because we should find there a community whose members do right for righteousness' sake—whose *acts* not alone, but whose *disposition* is to do good. The reason why we should tremble at the removal of all penalties, and the abolition of all laws, would be because we know men have wrong dispositions, and these would change the license to anarchy instead of freedom. Human laws, then, plainly mark the existence of evil inclinations on the part of men, and the danger that is apprehended from these. These laws, at least directly, make no man any better. They are the rocky headlands, and the careful breastworks, that shield from the fury of the impetuous waves—not the eternal lights that stream long and far over the troubled waters, to guide the wanderer and confirm the doubting. They appeal almost wholly to *selfish* principles. The good citizen is anxious for the preservation of the laws, because without them his life and his property are insecure—many a bad man may keep the laws, but it is because if he break them he will suffer. So, I say, these laws are good in

their season. For one I am far from recommending their abolition. However highly I may estimate human nature, I am not romantic, and whatever schemes I may indulge for human improvement, I would not be Utopian. There must be a great work accomplished in the souls of men before we abolish all laws, but that is a work that the laws can never perform. Until the flame of evil desire is quenched in the human heart; until the taint of sin, ages old, running deep and vital through the springs of action is removed, like the leper-spot, by the power of Christ, there will be crimes to punish, and wrongs to legislate for, the wide world over—in every stage of civilization, and under every form of government. The attempt to do away with bloody penalties and harsh laws is only made by a community in which is the consciousness that men have outgrown them—that they do more evil than good, by encouraging the very spirit that they should repress, and that laws which maintain more intimate relations to the springs of crime and afford more pungent motives, are to be preferred to those the only characteristics of which is their *severity*. One of the ideas of our age is that of moral suasion, and in its place it is a noble idea. But it may also be erroneously estimated. It would not do to strip away all

penalties, without any regard to the dispositions of men. There must be an appeal made to man's intellect and his heart, and when these can be influenced, then a reform will be accomplished and a check will be given to sin, better than all enactments or rigors can secure. This I understand to be the true aim of moral suasion—to influence the intellect and the heart—to appeal to *motives;* which it is deemed is a far more efficient preventive of crime than the mere blow which is returned for a blow. But with what agencies shall moral suasion work upon the heart? I answer, with the precepts and influences of christianity.

Thus, then, we are brought to this fundamental truth, that in order to prevent crime and evil action, we must alter the dispositions of men; that human laws and penalties cannot reach these; that the best efforts for reform aim at these, and that moral suasion is efficacious only as it controls the *intellect* and the *heart.* Everywhere we turn for a higher principle than we find in human institutions—we seek an element that shall penetrate the *heart,* that shall control and guide the disposition. This is the great want of society in its aspects of crime and shame and wrong. You may utter your penalties from the tribunals of the magistrate in

tones of thunder, you may soak scaffolds with human blood, you may rear walls of impregnable granite that shall frown in the very midst of busy life, you may plead for Peace, and Temperance, and Chastity—but until man's *affections* are altered, until his soul yields to that gushing influence that is the spirit of the precept "Love God and man," War will stalk abroad with its havoc, red-handed Murder will seek its victims at noon-day, Inebriety will stagger through the crowded streets, and impudent Sin will open its doors in the very face of virtue.

You boast of your *Reforms*—but sound not your trumpet of victory too soon. There is a mightier work to be accomplished than that which binds men together in associations, or makes them enthusiastic in great causes and pledges them to its support. Associations perform a good office. They awaken men from *selfishness*, draw them together by revealing the common bond of humanity, and in their great agitation of sympathies reveal the practical phases of the doctrine of human brotherhood. But they do not occupy the highest point in true civilization. They are but the medium ground that leads to better things. They aim—every association that has a true idea aims—to produce a free and a safe *individualism;* to make each

member of the human family feel that he is a *man*, and to know what depends upon that fact, the responsibility that hangs upon it, the dignity that belongs to it, the great law above all laws, the law of our spiritual being, that is to be obeyed. You should wish to make the drunkard a sober man, not because his neighbor is sober, not because it is popular to be sober, but because it is *right*—because that law of right is binding upon *him*, individually—because he is bound to be sober, if all men beside were reeling with their wine-cups to destruction. So with all reforms. Their true end is accomplished only when they make each man feel his individual responsibility —feel that for and from himself alone he is to stand or fall—feel that there is a great law which he, *he* is always and everywhere bound to obey, let the world move as it will, because he is a *man*. This, I say, is the true end of reforms; and it is to be feared that in the prominence which we give to the principle of *Association*, we lose sight of it, or under-estimate it. I say, then, we must not rest upon our armor, furl our standards, and sound our clarion of triumph, until men are not only reformed *outwardly*, but *inwardly*—not as *masses*, but as *individuals*. And, therefore, there is yet a great work to do. Oh! strip off the veil that the sunny light of day

and the decencies of society cast upon human life. Look in upon its million beating hearts. Read the corrupt desire that lurks below the smooth address. See the smouldering flame of passion whose outward manifestation is covered by a smile. Go behind the masked faces that crowd the public streets, and see the hideous thoughts that creep and nestle there all unchecked. See the ferocious hate, the salacious wish, the selfish narrowness, the unyielding pride, that flit like dark spectres across, or fan with untiring wings their embers in the soul. Here, oh! Legislator, are the *sources* of crime—can thy nicely-adjusted law that decrees so much penalty for so much overt action, reach these, the main-springs of it all? Here, oh! Reformer, is the life of the evils at which thou art aiming. This painted mask of Folly, this ancient custom of Sin, this shameless harlotry of Vice, thou mayest repress to-day; but to-morrow they will be all abroad again, in some new shape, under some trickery of human wit, some garment of moral sanctity perhaps—but they will be all abroad, because the heart will throw out its tenants. Could you drain the sea? From its thousand brine-springs, from its arteries that reach to the heart of great mountains, from its gurgling caves that pierce to the centre of the earth, *a new ocean*

would ever rush unconquered and inexhaustible.

But if sin thus lurks everywhere around us, what shall we say of that dark mass, that in dens and cellars, in peopled cities, lies matted together, steeped in vice and loathsome with crime? They were cradled in sin. They have always breathed tainted air. What light has reached them, has come dim and straggling through the murky atmosphere of their being, and this has been almost wholly quenched by the necessities of poverty, the hardening influences of association and example, and the excesses of gross and beastial sensuality. Thousands, millions, are there in this condition, seething together in sin, brooding over dark and fearful thoughts, feeding on the very offal of wickedness, clothed in the very rags of moral destitution. And what a vast work is to be accomplished in them! When you have made your rules concerning pauperism, and decreed your laws against crime, and organized your societies for the suppression of vice, your power to affect this mass has not reached skin-deep, unless you have introduced elements that shall penetrate to the *will*, and that shall elevate and guide the *affections*. Ere the true work is accomplished, *each one* of that enormous multitude is to be raised to a consciousness of his *responsibility*,

to a sense of his *dignity*. In that furnace of all vile passions that burns with a roaring flame in his heart, is to be kindled the fire of love and of devotion. His whole moral atmosphere is to be renovated. He who in his pursuit of evil hardly pauses for the barred dungeon, or the fearful gallows, is to be raised to such a height that if there were not a prison, or a gibbet, or a law in the land, he would not commit a wrong any more than he would cut off his right hand, pluck out his right eye, or take for his drink a draught of burning coals.

Here then, in this mysterious nature within us, upon the throne of this will, in the home of these affections, is to be the great reformation. Without that, all laws, all associations, are futile and shallow. When we look thus deeply into the human heart, into this tossing sea of passions, these clamorous interests, these stormy, unbridled lusts —how insignificant do our prison walls seem, how impotent our "act to amend an act entitled an act!" As though by cunning, shifting, and adjustment to every new sin, we thereby prevented sin! Why, our very laws themselves, how are they abused!—made a cloak for the very iniquity they were meant to crush—made a dagger for the very innocence they were ordained to shield. Under the sanction of the law, fraud plays its

juggling tricks—under the sanction of the law, wealth tramples upon honest poverty—under the sanction of the law impudent libertinism ruins unprotected virtue, and crime goes unpunished, and innocence suffers. And until we rise to that law that is above all laws, when men shall do right for righteousness' sake, and love the good for itself alone—when at midnight, or in the desert, or on the lonely sea, he will deal fairly with his brother from pure motives, and live a virtuous life from the dictates of a virtuous heart; until a revolution like this takes place, I say, we must expect to find transgression and evil in the world. The *Will* and the *Affections*, what shall control these? The human WILL, headlong and irresistible—it has broken down barriers of eternal rock, and swept over deserts of frozen ice, and bridged torrents, and felled forests; and what it is in the *material* world, it is in the *moral*, a principle that halts at no obstacle, and that moves in all things as the inner impulse dictates. The human AFFECTIONS, strong and unquenchable, how will they cling to whatever they cherish! If they worship *Mammon* what danger shall deter them—what wide sea or dreary waste shall prevent—nay, at what crime will they revolt? If they seek for *Fame*, who shall stand between them and it? What height so dizzy that they

will turn back—what gulf so deep that they will shrink? If their hunt is for *Pleasure*, they care not for all its stings. They will drain the wine-cup though its drops are molten fire; and even when they see the ruin approaching and hear the hoarse murmurs of the storm, they will sacrifice all to the bliss of the moment, and recklessly melt into the charmed delusion.

I have thus endeavored to unfold to you the great work that is to be performed, ere that at which the laws aim, and which Reformers seek for, is accomplished—the abolition of wrong and sin from human society. I have endeavored to unveil, to some extent, the human soul as its circumstances actually are at this moment, all around and within us, among high and low, rich and poor; and have shown you the fearful *sources* of iniquity lying in the main-springs of all action—the Affections and the Will.

And now, I ask, if that system which should come into the world, having for one of its objects the elevation of the soul to such a degree of goodness and moral strength, as to destroy the will and the disposition to sin, I ask if that system is not worthy of being heralded by Angels—of being announced in a chorus of Glory to God in the Highest, of Peace and good-will to men? Yes, Glory to God in the Highest! Glory to Him in

the Great Design, and the Triumphant Means of accomplishing such a work! Glory to Him that must result from the consummation of manhood purified from its sins, elevated above its sensuality, living the true and Divine life! And on earth, Peace to men! Peace after the stormy warfare of passion and guilt. Peace by the old shrines of martyrdom and on the fields of ancient battle. Peace in the haunts of secret crime, and the homes of shameless transgression. Peace where clanked the prisoner's chain, and where groaned the doomsman's axe. Peace where rose the sobs of injured innocence and the pleadings of trampled, bleeding humanity. Peace in the individual soul, where all is in harmony with God, and where the end of human laws and outward institutions is not destroyed, but *fulfilled*—fulfilled in the highest and the deepest sense.

And such a work, I say, Christianity came to accomplish. Here lies an explanation of its glorious prophecies and its blessed anticipations. In this consummation shall the valley be exalted and the mountain be brought low. In this shall the lamb lie down with the lion, and the leopard with the kid. In this shall the wilderness and the solitary place be glad, and the desert bud and blossom as the rose.

Christianity is not anarchy—is not opposed to

human institutions; it is above them, the great fountain from which they derive their sanctity and their vigor. It does not aim, with rash hand, to abolish all human laws at once. To do this would be commencing with the *outward* and proceeding to the *inward*. But, as long as the inward is wrong, the outward will be needed as a support and a protection. To strip away the outward first, then, would be to leave society and man exposed to all the violence of unbridled passion and fearless sin. But Christianity commences with the *inward*. It lays the deepest stress upon the regulation of every *motive*. It says a man that hates his brother is tainted with murder, and he who offends in one point of law is guilty of all. And when it has moulded the disposition, and renovated the heart and infused into it its spirit, then the outward law will not be destroyed, but it will melt away of itself—the necessity for it will be gone, its end will be reached, it will not be destroyed, it will be fulfilled. So long as there is need for the law, then, maintain the law; but remember this—whenever there is such need, there is also needed something else. Christianity is needed—the right affections, the good will are needed. He is needed, who, when he comes, comes to elevate man above the necessity for outward laws—comes not to bring anarchy but free-

dom; not violence, but love; comes not to destroy, but to fulfil.

My friends, it is but lately that we celebrated the anniversary of the advent of Christ and Christianity. And it seemed peculiarly appropriate that the commemoration of that event should fall, as it did, upon the Sabbath! Christmas upon the Sabbath! Thus the memorial of Christ's birth was blended with the associations of his death. On that day, the angels who sat by his tomb, were in the company of those who proclaimed his advent. Through the flash of his resurrection morning shone the star that hung over his manger. The annunciation "Unto us is born a Prince and a Saviour," mingled with the triumphant anthem, "He is risen."

But now what *is* this Christmas that we celebrate? Is it an *historical* advent merely that it proclaims, or is it an *experimental* advent also? Is it confined to a peculiar day and season of the year, or is it for all souls, at all seasons? "I travail in birth again," said the Apostle Paul, "until Christ be formed in you." What a depth of meaning is here! This is the true advent of Christ. Oh! to every soul is it Christmas morning when Christ is thus formed within it—when his spirit enters as its teacher and guide. Then a chorus of angels is heard. Then light breaks

in like that which hung over Euphrata. Then all that is good in human laws and outward institutions is fulfilled, for we become a law unto ourselves.

Hearer, this is an individual work—back of the renovation of society lies the renovation of individuals. It is a work of high and solemn, the *highest*, the most solemn responsibility. Let each one give heed to it!

THE END.

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